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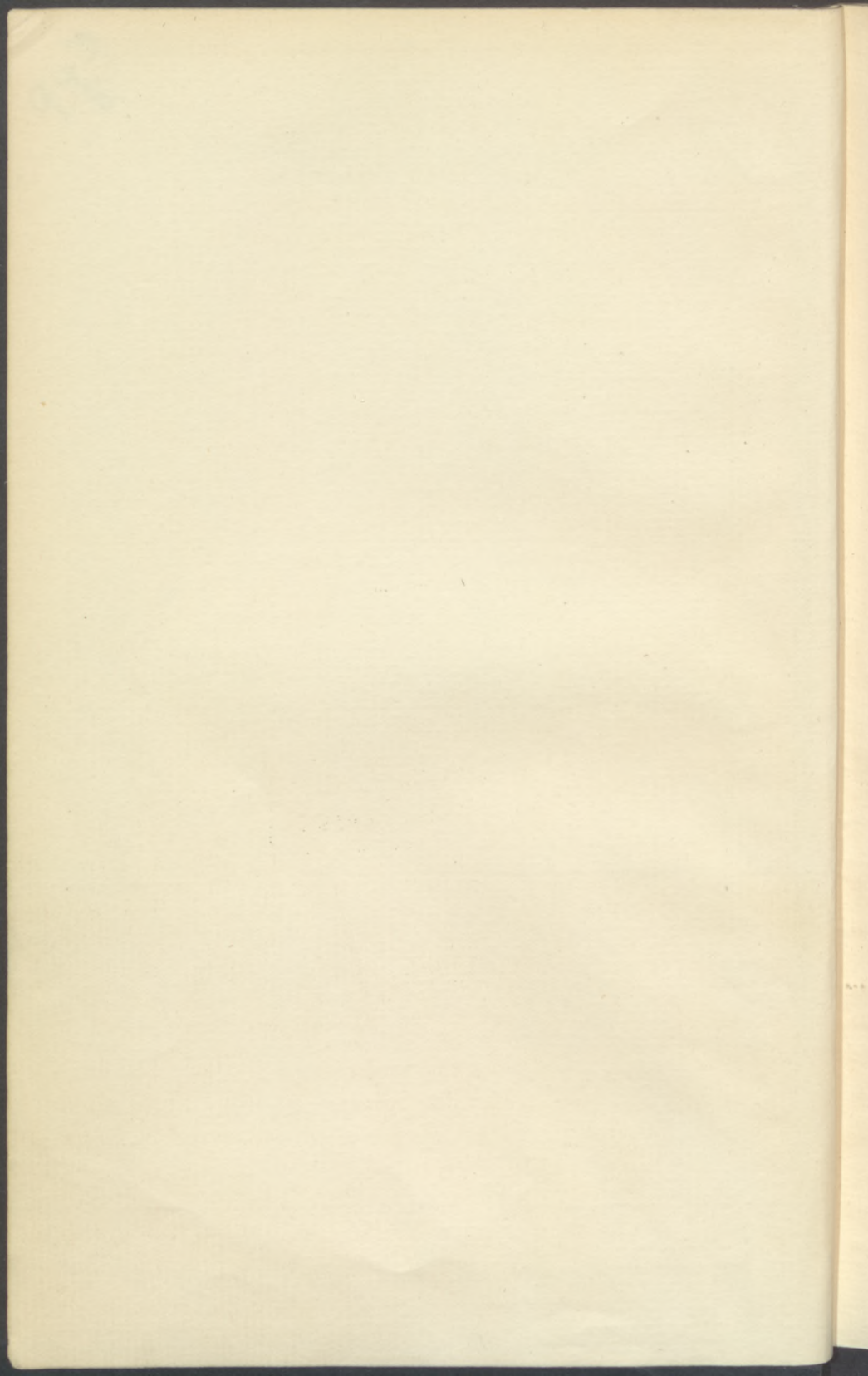
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MARSHAL PILSUDSKI

POLAND

1914-1931

By

ROBERT MACHRAY

LONDON

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MUSEUM STREET

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1932

POLAND

1914-1931

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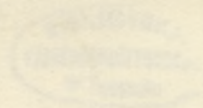
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TO
THE NEW EUROPE

Among the great results, whether direct or indirect, of the
World War is the New Europe which it brought about, none
more striking or important, and certainly none had a more
complete justification, than the Liberation of Poland, after a
captivity of upwards of a century, and her re-establishment
as one of the major States of the Continent. This book aims at
presenting a historical account, in considerable detail, of this
New Poland which emerged from the War, constituted herself a
State, fought and won a Great War on her own account,
defeated her old enemies, and is developing into a Great
Power. She owed much to the Allied and Associated Powers,
and to their victory over the Central Powers, but for their victory over the Central
Powers, except with the collapse of Russia, there would have
been no Poland at all. On the other hand, however, a great deal
has to be said for the Polish people and their Polish leaders
who prepared their own programme for what the Allied and
Associated Powers did for their country. But the first stimulus of
the New Poland really started into existence when Pilsudski,
then from Magdeburg, returned to Warsaw and took the
Government into his own hands. It is difficult to say what
would have happened if he had not went upon the scene at
that critical time. But he did so, and from that moment the
New Poland moved into life. The Armistice in Germany on
November 11, 1918, coincided with the beginning of what is
sometimes called the "first Democracy of Pilsudski". The
present Polish Republic dates officially from Armistice Day.
There has been a period of preparation for the restoration of
Poland. The two first chapters of this book are a record of the
struggle which began years before the War and lasted till the
beginning of the War. Chapter I describes the two main currents in which
Polish thought flowed prior to the outbreak of hostilities.
The second current was the desire for the restoration of the
Polish State, which was the aim of the Polish

THE NEW EUROPE

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PREFACE

AMONG the great results, whether direct or indirect, of the World War in the New Europe which it brought about, none was more striking or important, and certainly none had a more complete justification, than the Liberation of Poland, after a Captivity of upwards of a century, and her re-establishment as one of the major States of the Continent. This book aims at presenting a historical account, in considerable detail, of this New Poland which emerged from the War, constituted herself a State, fought and won a Great War on her own account, obtained definitive frontiers, and is developing into a Great Power. She owed much to the Allied and Associated Powers at the outset; indeed, but for their victory over the Central Powers, coupled with the collapse of Russia, there would have been no New Poland at all; she also owed, however, a good deal to her own efforts—a truth which is not so widely known as it ought to be. Pilsudski, Dmowski and other Polish leaders always expressed their deep gratitude for what the Allies and Americans did for their country. But the fact remained that the New Poland really started into existence when Pilsudski, freed from Magdeburg, returned to Warsaw and took the Government into his own hands. It is difficult to say what would have happened if he had not come upon the scene in the very nick of time. But he did so, and from that moment the New Poland sprang into life. The Armistice to Germany on November 11, 1918, coincided with the beginning of what is sometimes called the "first Dictatorship of Pilsudski." The present Polish Republic dates officially from Armistice Day.

There had been a period of preparation for the restoration of Poland; the first two chapters of this book are a record of this period, which began years before the War and lasted till the Armistice. Chapter I describes the two main currents in which Polish political thought flowed prior to the outbreak of hostilities: one insurrectionist and revolutionary, the other opportunist or realist. The first, which was in the line of the Polish

romantic tradition, sought to bring about the Liberation by force; the second, influenced by the disastrous results of former Polish insurrections, discountenanced resort to arms, and tried to gain political advantages gradually and as occasion served. During the War these two schools became known as Activist and Passivist respectively; Pilsudski was identified with the one, and Dmowski with the other. Later the Passivists were styled Ententophils, as they based themselves on the hoped-for victory of the Allies. Both groups worked for the Liberation, but unfortunately the opposition which had been pronounced between them earlier persisted and in a measure persists to this day.

Chapter II presents the story of the Kingdom of Poland set up by the Central Powers in 1915 and its demise in 1918. The leading figure here is Pilsudski, who inscribed the absolute independence of Poland on his banner, prevented the Germans from obtaining the man-power they expected to get from among the Poles, and was thrown into prison—to be released by the German Revolution of November, 1918. This chapter also narrates what was accomplished by Dmowski and the Polish National Committee in the West and in the United States, where Paderewski collaborated with Dmowski, the members of their party bearing the name generally of National Democrats. Their splendid contribution to the Polish cause was manifest when the Allies declared on June 3, 1918, for the “creation of a united and independent Polish State, with free access to the sea.”

These introductory chapters are given considerable space as materially assisting in making clear the course of events, particularly on the political side, in the New Poland. Next comes an account of the actual establishment of the Polish Republic under and very largely by Pilsudski; his negotiations with the National Committee in Paris and the great part played in Poland by Paderewski; the general election for and the sessions of the first or Constituent Sejm or Parliament in Warsaw; the fight in Poland and in Paris for the frontiers; and the culmination of this fight in Marshal Pilsudski's overwhelming defeat in August,

1920, of Soviet Russia in the Battle of Warsaw—the ever-famous “Miracle of the Vistula,” which saved not only Poland but also Central Europe, if not all Europe, from the Bolshevik World Revolution.

The narrative then passes on to the Constitution formulated and accepted in 1921 by the first Sejm—a Constitution which, thanks to the animosity of the National Democrats to Pilsudski, relegated the President—the Executive—to a position entirely subordinate to the Parliament—the Legislative—not so much from principle, but with the object of severely limiting the power of Pilsudski if elected President, and without regard to the fact that owing to the multiplicity of parties in the Sejm it was difficult to have a strong and stable Parliamentary Government with an adequate majority. The foreign policy of Poland in 1921 was marked by an alliance with France and another with Rumania; these have been renewed and enlarged since then. It was also concerned with promoting good relations with Germany, Soviet Russia, Lithuania and Danzig, the chief difficulties being connected with the Upper Silesia and Vilna questions—as recorded in Chapter V. The succeeding chapter deals more especially with some phases of the struggle between the Parliament and Pilsudski in 1922–23, but also are included the election and assassination of Narutowicz, the first President, and the election in his place of Wojciechowski; the temporary collaboration of Pilsudski with General Sikorski to save the situation consequent on the death of Narutowicz; and the coming into power of a Government composed of the National Democrats and the Moderate Peasants “Piast,” with Witos as Prime Minister, which was so hostile to Pilsudski as to compel him to resign from the army and retire into private life.

With the retirement of Pilsudski the first stage in the history of the New Poland may be regarded as coming to a close; throughout it the Marshal was dominant till the end, and during it Poland made considerable progress in national consolidation, though her financial position became deplorable, owing mainly to inflation. Chapter VII treats of the desperate efforts to remedy the financial situation, their remarkable success for a

time, and their subsequent failure, under a Government headed by Ladislas Grabski, who had been made financial dictator by the abdication of the Sejm in his favour. In 1924 the Budget was balanced at the cost of heavy sacrifices by the Polish people. For more than a year the zloty—the unit of the national currency—remained steady, but it began to fall towards the end of July, 1925, the Bank of Poland became embarrassed in attempting to maintain the zloty, and a fresh and much worse financial situation supervened.

This in its turn led to the resignation of the Grabski Government, and caused a great depression throughout the country which told heavily against its general economic position. The zloty appeared to be discredited. There was an acute "crisis of confidence," which was not quickly resolved. Another reason for this was that by that time a very large number of Poles had ceased to believe in the Parliament on account of its impotence from party strife and corrupt practices. For a while a new Government under Skrzynski, who had been Foreign Minister in the preceding Cabinet, brought about a slight improvement, but it did not last, and the general depression became intensified. Skrzynski resigned on May 5, 1926, and was succeeded by Witos, supported by that combination of National Democrats and Piast Peasants which had driven Pilsudski from the army. This closed the second stage in the story of the Republic. Poland was on the edge of political as well as financial bankruptcy, and many eyes turned to Pilsudski, who intervened effectively by carrying through the "May Revolution"—as described at some length in Chapter VIII. President Wojciechowski and the Witos Government were forced to resign, a new Government under Bartel being constituted, with Pilsudski as Minister of War. Shortly afterwards the Marshal was given the High Command of the army—long a matter of the bitterest contention between him and the National Democrats. The rest of the book describes the Pilsudski régime, after he had been elected to and had declined the Presidency, and Moscicki, his nominee, had been elected President. The Sejm which met after the May Revolution was

persuaded into voting important alterations of the Constitution that strengthened the position of the Executive and correspondingly reduced the power of the Parliament—in the direction desired by Pilsudski, who, however, was not satisfied, and advocated still more sweeping changes.

In the autumn of 1926 the Seym recovered courage and proceeded to attack the régime, but with little success. In 1928 there was a General Election, whose result, owing to the organization of Pilsudski's supporters into the "Non-Party Block of Co-operation with the Government," was a virtual triumph for the Marshal, as the Block secured much the largest representation in the Seym, though far short of the Parliamentary majority necessary for complete control. Apart from the continued struggle between the régime and the Seym, which led to a General Election in 1930, the high lights in the intervening two years were the financial and economic recovery and sustained progress of Poland, the successful flotation of a large Stabilization Loan on the international market, the amazing development of Gdynia, Poland's new port on the Baltic, and the great National Exposition in Poznan—all significant of vigorous growth and augmented stability.

A draft of a new Constitution by the Government Block was placed before the Parliament, but made no headway against the embattled Opposition. In the General Election, 1930, the Government Block achieved the absolute Parliamentary majority it lacked in the preceding Seym, but it failed to obtain the two-thirds majority required for the passing of a new Constitution. Meanwhile Poland was sharing in that world-wide financial and economic depression which, beginning in 1929, became very marked in 1930, and was still going on with increasing severity when this book was concluded in November, 1931. During these years of the régime Polish foreign policy was chiefly concerned with Germany where Nationalist demands for frontier revision had been strongly reinforced by the prodigious development of the Hitler movement.

Like *The Little Entente* published by me two years ago, this book is written from the point of view that the New Europe

which came out of the World War is, notwithstanding defects, far better politically and ethnically than was pre-War Europe. Without being propagandist, though sympathetic, this volume presents the facts in the case of the New Poland. Such a book is needed. In this connexion it may be well to recall that in their *Reply* to the *Observations* of the German Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in June, 1919, the Allied and Associated Powers said they were "placed under the very special obligation of using the victory they had gained to restore to the Polish nation the independence of which it was most unjustly deprived over a century ago. This spoliation was one of the greatest injustices ever recorded by history, a crime the memories and consequences of which have long poisoned the political life of a great part of the Continent of Europe. . . . The first duty of the Allies is to repair this injustice." Further, the *Reply* stated that "there shall be restored to Poland the regions inhabited by a population indisputably Polish."

It may be that the controversies which were engendered by the term "population indisputably Polish" obscured the tremendous force of the general statement made by the Allies of the absolute righteousness of the Polish cause. But during the first five years or so after the Liberation there was a tendency, especially in England, to misrepresent the New Poland by placing far greater stress on certain of her difficulties—tension with Germany over Upper Silesia and the "Corridor," and with Lithuania over Vilna, as well as troubles over the Ukrainian and other National Minority questions—than on the restoration of the State and the way in which the State was amply justifying its renewed existence. There was an impression that Poland was an aggressive, militaristic State bent on conquest, an impression that was sedulously encouraged and spread abroad by her enemies, and that misled many—myself, I confess, among the number. Not till 1925, when I first visited Warsaw after the War, did I begin to think that the general British view might be wrong. Since then I have become more than tolerably well acquainted with Poland and her people, and I have had to revise all my ideas about them.

To start with, I am convinced that Poland has come to stay. When I went up the Baltic in 1921 and touched at Danzig and other ports I was told by men who were well informed, and otherwise capable of a probably correct judgment, that Poland could not last. She was given a life of five years or perhaps ten at most, one reason alleged being her own incompetence. I went up the Baltic again in 1924, and heard much the same story. No one would repeat that story to-day. There is nothing ephemeral about Poland now. Again, the aims of Poland are purely pacific; they can be nothing else. As Zaleski, her able Foreign Minister, put it: "Sorely tried by the World War and by the war against Soviet Russia, the Poles aim solely at the economic and cultural restoration of their country, an aim that cannot be attained save by lasting peace." With "open" frontiers west and east Poland has to maintain a considerable army, but for her defence alone; to the same effect are her alliances with France and Rumania. Naturally she stands by the Peace Treaties which are the foundation of the New Europe.

In all, Poland may rightly be considered a bulwark of Western civilization and a powerful factor making for the equilibrium of Europe and the peace of the world. In Marshal Pilsudski she has a Great Man as leader and teacher, guardian and guide. Europe, hardly less than Poland, is in his debt, for it is now perfectly clear that it was the Marshal's military genius that conceived and won the decisive battles which overthrew and put to flight the hordes of the Soviet in August and September, 1920. It is equally certain that he rescued his country from a sterile Parliamentarism by his *coup d'état* in 1926, and inspired his countrymen with fresh courage and renewed confidence in the great future of their native land. In the critical period of world depression now being experienced he and his chosen associates may be trusted to steer the Polish ship of State with coolness, sagacity and determination. No Pole seriously questions his patriotism. He has still many opponents, but it would not be surprising if most of them in their heart of hearts admired this greatest of living Poles.

Most of the works on Poland that have appeared in English of

recent years have been concerned chiefly with polemics, as, for instance, with the question of the "Corridor." The result has been a distinct loss of perspective; the New Poland is not seen as a whole. Her chief characteristic, her wonderful growth as a State, has not been sufficiently emphasized, and her genuinely pacific policy has not been properly appreciated. It seemed to me that a book giving an account, in chronological order as far as possible, of the day-to-day drama, political and economic, of the restored State might be of use, and it is in this spirit that it is written. As regards my material I am chiefly indebted to *La Question polonaise pendant la guerre mondiale* of M. Filasiewicz for the introductory part of my book, and to the works of M. Smogorzewski in French and English which cover pretty well the whole history of the New Poland, the principal being his admirable *La Pologne restaurée*, but a full list will be found in the Bibliography at the end of this volume. I profited much from M. de Carency's *Joseph Pilsudski, soldat de la Pologne restaurée*, and from *La Pologne* by Professors B. Mirkin-Guetzévitch and André Tibal, as well as from Professor Dyboski's *Outlines of Polish History* and *Poland Old and New*. Many Polish, French and other books which have helped me are mentioned and sometimes quoted from in my text, but I must make special mention of Captain A. Przybylski's illuminating study *La Pologne en lutte pour ses frontières 1918-1920* (to give it its French title) and of General Camon's masterly monograph *La Manœuvre libératrice du Maréchal Pilsudski contre les Bolchéviks août 1920*, both containing references to the Marshal's own book *The Year 1920*, which I have read several times, as it is a veritable Pilsudski "document." These military books were supplemented by General Sikorski's *Between the Vistula and the Wkra* (to English its Polish title). Another book dealing with that early period in the history of the New Poland which was of assistance was M. Tommasini's *La Risurrezione della Polonia*. Yet another useful book was M. Potulicki's *Constitution de la République de Pologne du 17 Mars 1921*.

Touching the financial and economic side of my book the Reports of Sir E. Hilton Young and Dr. Kemmerer have been

laid under contribution, as well as the Reports of the Bank of Poland and of the Polish National Economic Bank. Most helpful was the *Combined Report of the Quarterly Reports of the Financial Adviser to the Polish Government*, Mr. Charles S. Dewey, from 1927 to 1930. Acknowledgments must also be made to the *Polish Economist*, and particularly for the important paper on the depreciation of the zloty it published by Dr. Mlynarski, with its detailed information, some of which is quoted in Chapter VII, and M. Kwiatkowski's *Economic Progress of Poland, 1928*. Necessarily a large number of newspapers, magazines and reviews have been consulted for both the economics and politics of my subject: of these I must mention the *Messenger Polonais*, the former semi-official daily of Warsaw, *La Pologne*, the monthly published in Paris by the "Association France-Pologne," and *Poland*, issued monthly in New York by the "American-Polish Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the the United States." I have had much kind assistance in material and advice from various friends and others in Poland and elsewhere for which I am indeed grateful, but the list of them is long—too long for individual enumeration, yet I must not omit to name my Warsaw secretary, Mlle Anna Klochowicz, for her invaluable research work.

In the spelling of proper nouns Polish usage has been followed throughout the book, except in the case of Christian names, as, for example, Ladislas, and of names of towns, rivers and so on, as Warsaw, Cracow, Vilna, the Vistula, which have standardized English forms. The Index not only contains short biographical notes in supplement of the text, but also gives the pronunciation of some Polish names. In not a few Polish words the collocation of consonants seems formidable and rather intimidating, but is distinctly less so if it is remembered that *cz* stands for tch, *sz* for sh, and *szcz* for shch, while *rz* is the same as the French *j*, the Polish *j* equalling *y* or *i*, *c* represents *ts*, and *u* is *oo*: thus *Zbrucz* is pronounced Zbrootch; *Orsza*, Orsha; *Szczara*, Shtchara; *Mozyrz*, Mozizh; *Polock*, Polotsk; and *Bug*, Boog. The termination *in* is pronounced een, e.g. *Lublin* becomes Loobleen. To simplify the Polish spelling the Polish accents

B



have been omitted and the crossed Polish *l* replaced by the ordinary letter. The Polish *w* is sounded like *v* or *ff*, and in such words as Stanislawow the *w* is given as *v* in the text—Stanislawov; so Nov(w)ogrodek, Suv(w)alki, etc.

Footnotes have been avoided altogether in the text, references, where essential or desirable, being provided in the body of the narrative. It may be added that the general omission of personal titles, except in quotations, implies no discourtesy or disrespect, as it was made solely to save space.

ROBERT MACHRAY

November, 1931



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14. The fourteenth illustration is a drawing of the head of a fish, showing the eye, gills, and mouth.

15. The fifteenth illustration is a drawing of the head of a fish, showing the eye, gills, and mouth.

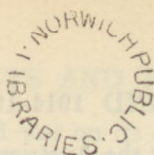
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POLAND

1914-1931

CHAPTER I

ACTIVISTS AND PASSIVISTS

1914-1915

1

WHEN the World War broke out in 1914 the darkest hour in the long captivity of Poland appeared to be reached. The culmination of the national tragedy, without a parallel in modern times and as tremendous as any in history, seemed to come when more than a million Poles were mobilized on opposite sides by the belligerent Powers. Unfortunate conscripts, most unwilling fratricides, they were compelled—the ultimate horror and degradation—to mutilate and kill each other, on what had been their own territory, by command of those who had riven it from them. More than a century had passed since their country had ceased to be an independent State and had been partitioned. Some glimmers of light proved merely misleading. Napoleon's Grand Duchy of Warsaw lived only six years. The new partition arranged by the Congress of Vienna, with a Kingdom of Poland—the "Congress Kingdom"—as one of its chief features, made no change in the end. The Cracow Republic vanished after a brief existence. Divided up, Poland remained part of Russia, of Austria and of Germany.

At the moment upwards of twenty million Poles were subjects of the Russian, Austrian and German Empires: twelve millions in Russian Poland, five millions in Austrian Poland, and the rest in German Poland, as these regions were widely, if not generally, designated. On August 1, 1914, Germany, and on August 6, Austria, declared war on Russia. Henceforth to the close of the gigantic conflict, so far as Russia was concerned, the Russian

Poles were arrayed against the Austrian and German Poles on the battlefields of the Eastern Front. Further, it was equally inevitable that, as the main theatre of their participation in the grim struggle would be on that front, Polish lands would be exposed to devastation and ruinous losses, and Polish people would have to endure all the attendant suffering and misery, caused, at least in part, by men of their own race, but much more by the far-sweeping campaigns of the contending armies.

POLAND ALMOST FORGOTTEN

In considering the history of the new free Poland that finally emerged from the wreck in 1918 the world should remember what the War meant to the mass of the Poles at its start and long afterwards. In anything like normal circumstances the blackness of the prospect in its almost insupportable pathos might well have appealed to universal human sympathy. But, of course, the circumstances were far from normal. France and England, with Russia, were engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the Central Powers. France, to whom the Poles had looked for help in some of their insurrections against their oppressors, knew them better than did England; but as the ally of Russia, the worst oppressor of Poland and the holder of two-thirds of her ancient territories, France was no longer interested in the Polish Question. In fact, interest in that question had become very dim everywhere—except among the Poles. As an international issue it had had no place in European political history since the ruthless suppression of the insurrection of 1863 had shocked diplomatists into making emphatic though unavailing protests against Russian barbarity. As it happened, England was the first country to send a remonstrance to the Russian Government.

For a time this tide of feeling in favour of Poland persisted with some strength, but presently it slackened, ebbcd and eventually disappeared. New political orientations consequent on the defeat of France and the rise of the German Empire in 1870-71 changed the situation. Every Pole who knew the last stages of the story of the tragic fate of his country must have

reflected bitterly that it was on its downfall that Prussia, the real maker and master of that Empire, had founded her greatness. In any case, the success of Germany boded no good to the Poles. The permanent elimination of Poland from the political framework of Europe was, or appeared to be, accepted tacitly or openly on all hands. Practically the Polish Question—the Liberation of Poland—sank out of sight and out of mind as other and more exigent national questions pressed into view. When the World War began very few people in Western Europe ever gave Poland a thought. However, the Polish Question was still alive and active among those whom it most intimately concerned—the Poles themselves.

POLAND NOT DEAD

If in the mass the Poles were hapless conscripts bent to the will of others, they yet preserved their national consciousness, and besides possessed leaders who had freedom sufficient to think and act for them. The partitioning Powers had succeeded in erasing Poland from the map, but had signally failed to obliterate Polish nationalism. The Polish people remained a national unity in language and literature, traditions and religion, despite the dismemberment of their country and the determined and protracted efforts of its despoilers to Russify or Germanize them. In brief, they were what they were—Poles, forming a Nation compacted together and distinguished from other nations by the thousand years of its history, whether in the day of glory or the night of eclipse.

In 1795 the last vestiges of the independence of Poland had been swept away by the three hostile Powers, but the captivity they imposed on their victims gave in the end striking witness to the indestructible vitality of the Polish race, which, notwithstanding oppression, often of the cruellest character, increased and multiplied. In 1914 there were nearly thrice as many Poles on their native soil as there had been in 1795. Not all the results of the Captivity were bad; some, in fact, could be accounted positive gains. Naturally these results varied in the three partitioned areas in accordance with the type of Govern-

ment each had over it, and the political and economic opportunities each presented to the Poles.

THE THREE AREAS AND THEIR POLITICS

A consideration which applied to all three was that the general progress of Parliamentarism, if not of democracy, throughout Europe had given the Poles a political standing, not ineffective in Austrian Poland, but largely illusory in Russian Poland and German Poland. From the first area the Poles in 1914 held 106 seats out of 516 in the Reichsrat at Vienna, and were a power within the Austrian Empire; from the second they had 12 representatives from the Congress Kingdom and three from the *Kresy* or eastern borderlands in the Duma at Petrograd; and from the third they had 17 members in the Reichstag at Berlin. In neither Duma nor Reichstag had the Poles much influence; they were not meant to have any.

Under Russia the Poles, though continuing to suffer from political oppression and prolonged attempts to Russify them, profited enormously from the rise and rapid growth of their industries and commerce, of which the great manufacturing city of Lodz was the most salient example. Russian Poland became the main supplier of the wants of all Russia, a vast and eager market. Under Austria the Poles in Galicia, after undergoing similar oppression and in their case attempted Germanization for many years, had by 1867 obtained self-government, as well as a representation in the Reichsrat which increased as time went on till the Polish vote became one of its most important elements. Considerable numbers of Galician Poles entered the Austrian bureaucracy, and thus were familiar with the work of administration—experience which was invaluable to Poland after her Liberation. On the other hand, Austrian Poland was little developed economically. Under Germany the Polish struggle against oppression and Germanization took the form of a protracted fight for the actual possession of the land, and in the course of it the Poles learned by method and discipline to turn against the Germans the very economic weapons with which they were to have been conquered. This

thoroughly well-organized resistance was successful, the Poles added to their holdings, and German Poland as a whole was in an excellent state from the economic point of view.

Thus, of the three partitioned areas, Austrian Poland was the most advanced politically, but Russian Poland and German Poland were far better off economically. The gains to the Poles that resulted from the Captivity were to some extent offset by certain facts, the chief of which came from the interplay of personal contacts and common customs between them and their rulers in daily life. In Russian Poland industrial and commercial prosperity, in correlation with the imposing size and immense power of the Russian Empire, conduced to the spread of a spirit of realism or opportunism among many Russian Poles. The same ideas could be seen working among the other subject nationalities within the Empire. In Austrian Poland the thing had gone much farther; quite a number of Austrian Poles proclaimed their loyalty to the Habsburgs; they certainly could put forward the plea that as compared with their brother Poles elsewhere they were politically emancipated; they were more or less content with things as they were. In German Poland, though it had been arrived at dissimilarly, there also prevailed a material, practical view of politics, which did not fail to take into account the might of the German Empire. Owing to the particular circumstances of each of the three partitioned areas, certain differences of mentality had thus developed among the Poles. These were clearly manifest before the War, and affected Polish action during and after the War.

It would have been unnatural if in the passing of four or five generations of Poles in captivity under three different systems of Government, with their individual policies, codes of laws, educational methods and other distinctive apparatus of life, these quasi-psychological differences had not appeared in the three sections into which Poland had been divided. But the racial unity, the sense and the urge of it, not only survived but remained the supreme factor. This was seen most of all in the outcome of the great changes that took place in the

politico-social relations of the Poles to each other as a people during those years.

When Old Poland fell there were virtually only two classes in the country—the nobility, who alone had governed or misgoverned the nation, and the peasantry, whose state was that of serfdom. The towns had decayed, and a middle class scarcely existed. One of the principal features of the Captivity was the gradual reduction of the political power of the nobility by losses in wars and insurrections, confiscation of estates, exile and various repressions, until it was nearly extinguished, as in Russian Poland. A second feature was the abolition of serfdom—in Prussia in 1823, in Austria in 1848 and in Russia in 1861—and the subsequent improvement in the condition of the peasantry economically, coupled with the birth and growth of their political consciousness, as was the case with the peasantry in other parts of Europe. The third feature was the rise into importance of a Polish middle class, composed of scions of the impoverished nobility, professional men, industrialists and merchants in the towns, a development which was most marked in Russian Poland and in smaller measure in German Poland. The lack of such a bourgeoisie had been one of the things that had brought about the national downfall in the eighteenth century. The fourth feature came out of the industrial movement—a working class, a proletariat sprang up in the manufacturing, engineering, mining and milling districts.

Of the four classes—nobility, bourgeoisie, proletariat and peasantry—the last was by far the most numerous, about two-thirds of all the Poles being engaged in agricultural pursuits. In proportion as the peasants became well-to-do, they began to think politically. Before long peasant deputies were to be seen and heard in both the Diet of Galicia and the Reichsrat at Vienna. In Austrian Poland, too, Socialism became active about the same time, and also had its representatives in the provincial and imperial parliaments. In Russian Poland Socialism had developed earlier, though not so openly; at first the Polish Socialists worked in combination with Russian revolutionaries, but later separated from them and showed themselves

to be intensely nationalist, just as did the peasants. National Liberation was no longer the cause of a class, but of all classes among the Poles, now more than ever, if possible, a national unity.

QUESTION OF LIBERATION

Liberation was the aim common to the Poles, but there was much diversity of opinion among them, not only respecting the means or method by which it was to be attained, but also regarding the kind of liberation—partial or complete—to be achieved. All these Poles were, however, sincerely patriotic; their divergent points of view were conditioned by their upbringing and environment, as already indicated, and it was difficult for them, even with the best will in the world, to get away from them. The two main currents in which Polish political thought flowed were described during the War as *Activist* and *Passivist* respectively; Revolutionary and Opportunist or Realist were the names previously given them, the method of the former being the revolution, which was in the line of the Polish romantic tradition, while the latter, recalling how all former Polish insurrections had failed disastrously, frowned on resort to armed intervention, and accepting the obvious realities of the situation, sought to obtain a better political position by gradual steps or as occasion served. However, not all those denominated Activists were revolutionaries in equal degree, particularly in Austrian Poland, at that time; then and for some time during the War a large number of the Poles in that area were frankly Austrophil, nor did they change their views till it was abundantly clear that Austria was so dependent on Germany that her Polish policy was and would be determined by the other and far stronger partner.

In all three sections of Poland it was the Socialists who were the revolutionaries; they advocated and adopted insurrection as the means for procuring liberation, and in this sense they worked incessantly on the Polish masses, whether workmen or peasants. In 1886 Polish delegates were present at the first Socialist Congress in Paris, the object of which was to resuscitate

the Second International. Two years later Polish delegates from the three partitioned areas, but making a single delegation, took part in the second Congress, which was held in Brussels. In 1892 the Polish Socialist Party—*Polska Partja Socjalistyczna*, hence known as the P.P.S.—was formed at a Paris Congress from delegates of all the Polish Socialist groups. In the following year the P.P.S. established itself in Warsaw, and in the forefront of its programme was the struggle for a democratic and independent Polish Republic. It was a fighting, a revolutionary programme.

In the next year, 1894, the Polish League, which had been founded in 1886 secretly, was reorganized as the National League in Warsaw. It combated the ideology of the Socialists, dissociating itself from all notion of revolution, and from it sprang the Polish National Democratic Party, which was constituted in 1897 as a legal organization, a fact which in itself was significant of the party having nothing to do with the insurrectionary spirit. The National Democrats in their appeal to the masses sought support from the peasants rather than the working class, and in any case they had with them the bulk of educated Polish opinion. Their immediate objective was autonomy—partial not complete independence; they thought the latter was impossible of attainment in those days.

THE LEADERS—PILSUDSKI

As always and everywhere with strong political movements or powerful parties, the two main currents of Polish politics were associated with and directed by great leaders. Poland was fortunate in having among her sons four men of outstanding ability and character. One was indubitably a man of genius and, as events proved, the greatest of them all: Joseph Pilsudski. The others were men of talent and force. Foremost among them was Roman Dmowski, the chief of the National Democrats. Next in importance came Ladislas Leopold Jaworski, a Professor in the University of Cracow, and the head of the Conservative Poles in Austria. The fourth was Ignace Daszynski, the leader of the Polish Socialists in Austrian Poland; he pre-

sided over the Socialist delegation from all Poland at the Brussels Socialist Congress in 1891. In the following year Pilsudski made the acquaintance of Dmowski at Warsaw, but was not attracted by the programme of the National Democrats. He decided to throw in his lot with the Socialists in Russian Poland for the reason that they were insurrectionists, most of them being prepared to fight to the death like himself for the Liberation of Poland.

At a meeting of the Polish Socialist Party held near Vilna in 1893 Pilsudski was recognized there and then as one of the leaders of the Socialist movement. It was not till much later—1901—that he came into touch personally with Daszynski at Cracow. Some of the Polish Socialists in Austria were not in entire sympathy with Pilsudski's gospel of insurrection, but Daszynski supported him, as for many years afterwards, and in time all the Polish Socialists fell into line behind Pilsudski. While the Great War, enlarging into the World War, was running its terrific course Pilsudski came to be regarded as incarnating one of the two main currents of Polish political thought, and Dmowski more and more stood out as the typical representative of the other. Both leaders did excellent work for Poland, but an antagonism developed between them which had a profound influence on subsequent events.

A ROMANCE OF HISTORY

Judged from almost any point of view the life of Joseph Pilsudski must be considered one of the most romantic in history. An idealist, a romantic himself in mind, but a realist in practice, he believed in the virtue of arms and the policy of the *fait accompli*. The advice once given by himself to his friends to be romantic or idealist in aims, but practical as regarded the means of realizing them, was in some sort a summary of the man. Descended from the princely Lithuanian family of Ginet, he was born on December 5, 1867, at Zulow, in the neighbourhood of Vilna (Wilno), his parents being Joseph Pilsudski, who tried to farm his property and exploit other economic projects in a scientific manner, but lost money in the effort, and Maria

Pilsudska, née Billewicz, who had brought her husband the estate on which they lived. The father was remarkable for the determination with which he carried out his schemes despite repeated failures, the mother for her devotion to her family of six sons and four daughters, in whose hearts she instilled love of Poland and hatred of Russia, the oppressor.

The boy Joseph came into the world four years after the insurrection of 1863, and his early years were deeply shadowed by the terrible sufferings of the Poles because of that abortive attempt at liberation. In one of his books, *Walka rewolucyjna w zaborze rosyjskim* (The Revolutionary Struggle in Russian Poland), he stated that ten years after the insurrection the dread memory of the tribunals of the Russian Muravieff, known as the Hangman from the numerous executions of Poles he ordered, was still so vivid that Polish people trembled at the sight of a Russian official, and faces grew long in Polish homes when a representative of the Russian authorities was announced. It was in this atmosphere that Joseph, the younger, passed through youth to manhood, and it left its ineffaceable mark upon him.

Fire devastated Zulow in 1874, and the family moved to Vilna, where Joseph went to school; the Gymnasium he attended was staffed by Russians, who had nothing but contempt and derision for all things Polish. Nearing manhood he studied medicine at the University of Kharkoff, and there he met several Russian revolutionaries. After spending about a year at Kharkoff he returned to Vilna. In 1887 he was arrested on a charge of being involved in an anti-Tsarist plot, and though absolutely innocent, was sentenced to five years in Siberia. He went back to Vilna in 1892, with his character formed, his mind made up, and his body toughened to endure hardship. His political activities for Poland dated from that year.

PILSUDSKI AND THE SOCIALISTS

Pilsudski's return from Siberia coincided with the formation of the Polish Socialist Party. He had become a Socialist, or

rather had adopted Socialism as a means to an end; its chief attraction for him was that it was insurrectionary. In his book, *Rok 1863* (The Year 1863), he said that the evil results of the insurrection of that year on Polish life in general had by this time led many to the view that while insurrection was a fine thing, it was of little practical value, and all attempts at it should be discouraged. Pilsudski held a very different opinion of the value of the insurrectionary method, particularly if the masses could be imbued with its spirit, as fully as he hoped, in the fight for Polish liberation. At the Congress of the Polish Socialists held in 1893 at Vilna it was decided to publish secretly a paper in the Socialist interest, and the job was assigned to Pilsudski. The first number of this journal, which was called *Robotnik* (The Worker), was printed in secret in June, 1894, at Lipniski, near Oszmiana, and distributed. Pilsudski had very little help, and in fact he was the editor-in-chief, principal printer and the most active distributor of the paper himself.

In the following year the *Robotnik* was transferred to Vilna, where Pilsudski had the assistance of Stanislas Wojciechowski, a future President of Free Poland. Pilsudski married about this time, and his wife greatly helped him with the paper. In 1896 the Pilsudskis removed to Lodz, taking with them the printing-press. The *Robotnik* now had a circulation of 2,000 copies; it consisted of a small sheet of twelve pages, and a fortnight of hard work was needed for its preparation. The Russian authorities tried to suppress it, but they had first to discover where it was printed, and did not succeed in doing so till February, 1900, when on information received—from Russian Poles, it was said—they found the printing-press in Pilsudski's house. The Pilsudskis were arrested, and he was thrown into the horrible Tenth Pavilion of the Citadel of Warsaw, from which there was believed to be no escape. It looked as if Pilsudski was doomed, but he feigned insanity so successfully that he was transferred to a military hospital in Petrograd whence, with the aid of a member of the staff who was secretly a Polish Socialist, he made good his escape. After a time he reached

Kieff, where the *Robotnik* was then published, and finally he went to Cracow. During his journeyings he had been joined by his wife, who had been set free, with a caution, by the Russian police, and the pair passed several months together in Cracow.

PILSUDSKI'S FIRST MOVES

Towards the close of 1901 Pilsudski went to London, then the Mecca of political exiles from many countries, among these *émigrés* being several Polish revolutionaries "wanted" by the Russian police. The meeting-place of the Poles was a poor little house, 7 Beaumont Square, Mile End, and most of them lived in the direst poverty, but they had managed to print and publish a paper called *Przedswit* (The Dawn) for some years; it ran for 22 years altogether, and it was in its pages, about 1895, that the principles of the new Polish revolutionary movement were formulated for the first time. In the spring of 1902 Pilsudski was back again in Cracow, and during the next two years his activities were incessant and tremendous. His influence on the masses waxed stronger and stronger, and he became the acknowledged head of the whole revolutionary, insurrectionist movement.

His first big opportunity presented itself, as he thought, when Japan went to war with Russia in February, 1904. Like the other nationalities within the Russian Empire the Poles were mobilized, and Pilsudski turned his attention to the prospect of stopping or retarding their mobilization, but found very little support for anything of the kind among the National Democrats and others whom he approached in Russian Poland, into which he fearlessly ventured repeatedly. Outside the ranks of the Socialists he was advised to act with "moderation" and according to "good sense." He was told that the real interests of the nation lay in the economic and intellectual improvement of the people, not in opposing Russia, in that crisis. His next move was to go to Japan in the hope of obtaining assistance from her Government for an insurrection in Poland; he also proposed to the Japanese an attack by the Poles on the Russian

rear in Europe. Seeing that he had no army himself, it was not a particularly practicable thing. In Tokyo, moreover, he met Dmowski, the leader of the National Democrats, and the strong personal antagonism of these two men to each other was accentuated when Dmowski told the Japanese that Pilsudski's plan was not only incapable of realization, but would be detrimental to the Polish cause. Japan turned a deaf ear to Pilsudski, and he left for Cracow; Dmowski went back to Warsaw.

THE LEADERS—DMOWSKI

Born in Warsaw in 1864, Roman Dmowski came of a noble family which was no longer connected with the land, his father being a fairly successful road contractor. Dmowski graduated at the University of Warsaw in natural history; he specialized in biology, a branch of science which always interested him, and his political outlook was largely influenced by his thorough education as a naturalist. While at the university he joined a students' club which at the start had nationalistic and socially radical tendencies, but developed into two distinct organizations, attached respectively to the National Democrat and Polish Socialist Parties. His political activity began in 1886. In 1891 he organized a political demonstration on the occasion of the centenary of the Third of May Constitution (passed by the Parliament of Poland on May 3, 1791, and one of its last Acts), and he was compelled consequently to leave the country.

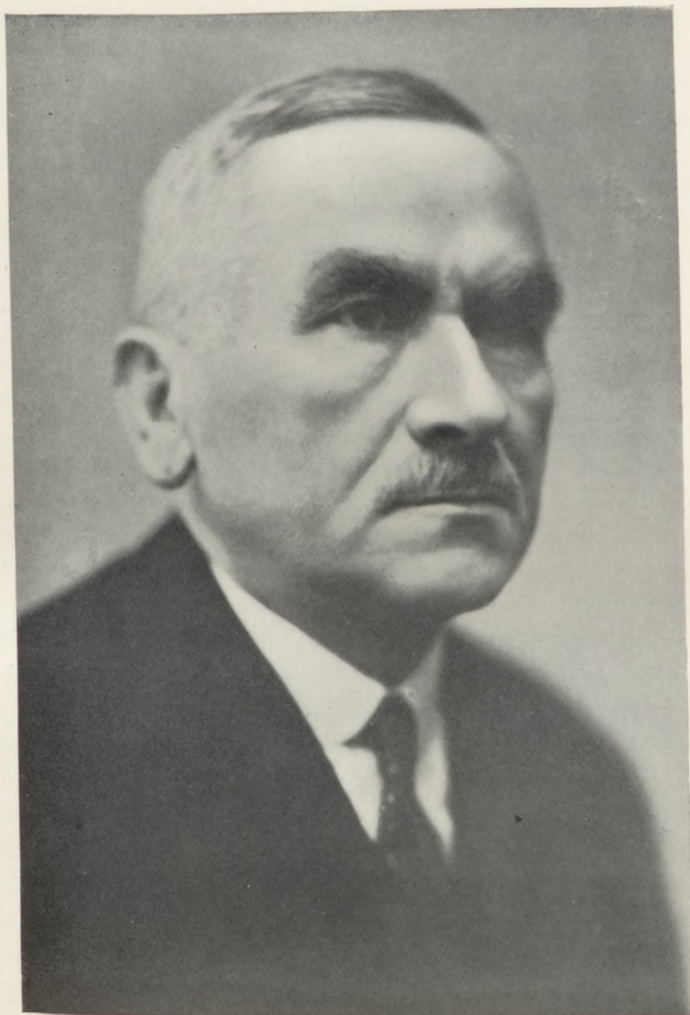
On his return to Warsaw after several years' residence in Paris, he was arrested and deported to Dorpat, but escaped and went to Galicia four years later. In Lwow he began the publication of the *Przegląd Wszechpolski* (The All-Polish Review), and issued other Polish propaganda works which, intended for country people and students in the Congress Kingdom, were printed on tissue paper and thus easily smuggled into that area. In 1901-02 Dmowski travelled in North and South America with the object of organizing politically the Poles resident there. His first political work, *Mysli Nowoczesnego Polaka* (Ideas of a Modern Pole), appeared in 1902, and

propounded the principles of his realistic philosophy; the book was very popular with the rising generation of Poles, and was for a time their political Bible.

PILSUDSKI STRIKES

Pilsudski recurred in Cracow to his scheme of retarding, if not of stopping, mobilization in Russian Poland, and aided by the Polish Socialist Party he staged an armed demonstration in Warsaw as a protest against it; a fight ensued with Russian troops, and there were casualties on both sides. Unimportant as regarded immediate results, the affair was significant as a manifestation of the insurrectionary spirit once more openly at work among the Poles. When the Revolution of 1905 broke out in Russia Pilsudski had some hope that it would lead to a Polish national insurrection, but the Russian revolutionaries were not strong enough to succeed in their attempt. He took advantage, however, of the confused situation in 1905-06 to organize his first fighting corps, the *Organizacja Bojowa*, to strike at the Russians in every way possible at the time. Detachments of Cossacks were attacked, posts were raided, Polish prisoners were rescued, and mail trains were "held up," "gone through," and despoiled to provide funds for the movement of Pilsudski, who risked his life over and over again in bringing off these audacious *coups*, in one of which, at Bezdany, he relieved the Russian Government of nearly three million roubles, or about £300,000. It was Pilsudski's way of making war then on Russia. It was also his way of making his countrymen understand his method and aims.

These exploits increased Pilsudski's fame, and made him a hero in some Polish eyes, but their effect on Russia was exceedingly slight. When the 1905 Revolution came to an end these ventures soon ceased, and Pilsudski was obliged to take refuge in Austrian Poland again. In 1906 the Central Committee of the Polish Socialist Party decided to dissolve his organization, notwithstanding his objections as well as those of Daszynski and others. Meanwhile the Duma, a sort of popular or Lower



M. ROMAN DMOWSKI

WORWICH PUBLIC
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House, with the Council of the Empire as an Upper House, had been formed in Russia by order of the Tsar. The first Duma had 442 members, of whom the Congress Kingdom supplied 34, all being National Democrats; the Polish Socialists boycotted the elections. That Duma (1906) had a very brief life, and new elections were held in 1907, but the second Duma also existed for only a short time, the Electoral Law was changed, and the Polish representation was materially reduced, though remaining National Democrat in character. In the Council of the Empire the Polish representatives belonged mainly to the Realist Party, which in a sense was more pro-Russian than the National Democrat Party as its guiding principle was to make the best of things as they were, and not to indulge in impossible dreams—even of autonomy within the Empire—as they thought the National Democrats did.

DMOWSKI AND THE DUMA

His quality of leadership recognized, Dmowski represented Warsaw in the second and third Dumas at Petrograd, and was the President of the Kolo or Polish Club, a political body composed mostly of National Democrats, in that city. In the Duma he asserted that the Congress Kingdom was entitled to autonomy under the rights given to it by the Congress of Vienna—rights which Russia had violated; but he made this claim with moderation. He supported the Russian Government respecting the contingents demanded for the army, and he and the other Polish deputies voted for them, but in his speech he asserted that Russia required a strong army so as to be completely independent of foreign Powers, and this statement brought down on him the wrath of the Russian Germanophiles, who perfectly understood that he had Germany in mind when referring to "foreign Powers." His meaning was that the Poles did not wish their destinies to lie in the hands of a Russia submissive to German guidance. It was then that Stolypin, Russian Prime Minister, but with German sympathies, retaliated by reducing the number of Polish deputies in the next Duma

by nearly two-thirds. Dmowski, however, remained a strong partisan of Russia against Germany.

In his book, *Niemcy, Rosja a kwestja polska* (Germany, Russia and the Polish Question), published at Lwow (Lemberg or Leopold) in 1908, and simultaneously in Russian at Petrograd, he maintained that if the Polish nation was menaced with the loss of its existence in the future, the threat would not come from Russia, but from Germany. Further, he expressed the opinion that owing to the difficulties which beset her both without and within Russia would not be able to continue her oppressive policy towards the Poles, but must modify it materially. For himself he desired a radical alteration in Russia's relations with Poland by the overthrow of that policy—a change which, he declared, was not only in the interest of the Poles, but in that of all the peoples who were menaced by the pressure of German conquest, and therefore it was in the interest of Russia too. With this change effected, he professed that he would be satisfied with autonomy for Poland within the Russian Empire.

PILSUDSKI'S PLANS

In the meantime Pilsudski was making fresh plans in Austrian Poland for the formation of a military organization in accordance with his views for liberating Poland. No one knew better than he that that object needed preparation on as large a scale as possible on ground that was friendly, where arms and other munitions could be readily obtained, and officers and men instructed, drilled and equipped unimpeded. And this he found in Austrian Poland. In 1908 at his request Casimir Sosnkowski, one of his intimates and afterwards one of his generals, founded a secret military society called *Zwiazek Walki Czynnej* (Union for Active Struggle). This was the year of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Dual Monarchy, an international crisis being the immediate result, with Russia, France and England aligned against the Central Powers, a foreshadowing of what was to come a few years

afterwards. There was the possibility of a war between Russia and Austria-Hungary. The crisis passed, but without any real improvement of the relations between Austria and Russia. In 1909 Pilsudski, asked what was to be done if war broke out between these Empires, replied that he and his followers must fight against Russia.

In 1910 the Union for Active Struggle became the *Zwiazek Strzelecki* (Union of Riflemen's Clubs), and unlike the other was an open, legally constituted body, on which the Austrian authorities looked with a certain benevolence. In opposition to Pilsudski's riflemen, Democrat Poles organized the *Druzyny Strzeleckie* (Riflemen's Clubs), but this association agreed with Pilsudski on fighting for Austria if she went to war with Russia. Commenting on the situation Daszynski in his *Pamietniki* (Memoirs) stated it was thought in Vienna that these Poles took that attitude "from love of Austria," as there was no understanding in that quarter of any Polish plans seriously aiming at independence. There was some suspicion, however, in Austrian military circles of Pilsudski's good faith, but this was laid to rest when he took part with a company of his riflemen in a review of troops in Vienna; in the sequel he was permitted to drill his men without interference from outside.

Yet for him Austria was not an end but a means—towards Polish independence; he was anything but genuinely Austrophil, as so many Austrian Poles were. Their leader, Jaworski, basing himself on the undeniable truth that Austria alone of the partitioning Powers did not oppress the Poles, believed and taught that it was through her that the Poles would realize their national aspirations. His policy, as compared with that of Dmowski, appeared the better founded on the facts of the case, at least as they lay on the surface—Russia was still the oppressor of the Poles, whereas Austria had long ceased to be so. The weakness of the Austrian Empire was far from being completely comprehended at that time, and no one could have foreseen that it was fated to crash in utter ruin before ten years passed. As things were, Jaworski and those who thought as he did seemed to stand on fairly solid ground.

In 1912 the Liberation movement under Pilsudski made a further advance by the constitution of another organization, the *Komisja Tymczasowa Skonfederowanych Stronnictw Niepodleglosciowych* (The Provisional Commission of the Confederated Independentist Parties), which grouped together the partisans of Pilsudski in Austrian Poland and the secret organizations of the Socialists and others in Russian Poland. The movement took on the name of Independentist. It grew so rapidly, especially in Galicia, that the National Democrats to counteract its appeal created two rival organizations, one of which was the *Druzyny Bartoszowe* (Bartosz Companies.—Bartosz was the Christian name of a heroic Polish peasant who fought under Kosciuszko in 1794.) They were intended mainly to draw possible recruits away from Pilsudski's clubs of riflemen. The Russophiles also formed a second organization, the *Rada Narodowa* (National Council), with its headquarters at Lwow, which had a much wider scope than that of the Bartoszites, whose field of action was confined almost altogether to Eastern Galicia. In December, 1912, the Independentists issued a statement of policy which was addressed to all the Poles of the three sections, and said: "So long as Austria-Hungary in her own interest will fight Russia, she is our ally. Her victory will benefit us, because the overthrow of Russia in the course of the War which is about to come will be our gain. But we shall not forget that it is above all the cause of Poland that we are defending." The words "the War which is about to come" showed what Pilsudski expected.

As against the Independentist statement Dmowski, at a meeting of the National Democrats and others held in Cracow, read a paper in which he tried to show that, in the circumstances of the time, an anti-Russian orientation was not a Polish national orientation at all; the *status quo* was likely, he maintained, to yield far better results as regards the solution of the Polish Question "through the evolution of the international situation and the success of Polish policy"—meaning

that of himself and the National Democrats as contrasted with that of Pilsudski and the Independentists. The two chief schools of Polish political thought now stood out as (1) *Russophil*, with Dmowski in front, and (2) *Independentist*, with Pilsudski leading and Jaworski collaborating to more or less purpose, though moving along another course which seemingly carried him far away from that of Pilsudski. What Jaworski and the Cracow Conservatives sought was the union of Russian Poland with Austrian Poland under the Habsburg dynasty.

THE AMERICAN POLES

The sharpness of the antagonism between the two main Polish schools was unhappily only too evident, and it did not diminish as time went on. Both had their affiliations and propagandists abroad working against each other, especially in the United States, in which resided upwards of three million Poles, a considerable number of whom had been settled in that country for one, two or even three generations. Kosciuszko and Pulaski had been prominent figures in the War for American Independence. During the Polish insurrection of 1831 committees were formed in America to raise funds for the Poles, and after its suppression many Poles went to the United States. There was a fresh wave of Polish emigration after the troubles of 1848, and again after the failure of the insurrection of 1863. Within the forty years before the Great War more than two million other Poles had found homes in the United States.

Fitting themselves into American life the Poles became good American citizens, but they did not forget their native land and retained something at least of its culture; they had their own societies and clubs of one kind and another, and about eighty papers and periodicals in their own language, a few of which were the organs of political groups. One of these, the Polish National Alliance, formed in Philadelphia in 1880, had its origin in an attempt to preserve the nationalism of Polish Americans, and it held the view that the whole body of the Poles in the United States could be regarded as making a fourth section to be added to the three sections of European

Poland—a fourth province of Poland. It was a poetic extravagance, but anyhow the members of the Alliance took the keenest interest in all that went on in the mother country. Another of these societies of a political cast was the Alliance of Polish Socialists. Its membership was very much smaller than that of the National Alliance, and it was not an independent organization like the other, but was a branch of the Polish Socialist Party, and recognized Pilsudski's leadership in the struggle for the Liberation of Poland. In 1912 the Independentists had started a fund called the *Skarb Wojskowy* (Army Treasury) at Zakopane, in Galicia, and invited contributions from all and sundry; subscriptions came freely from the American Poles for months, and then slowed down owing to the representations, in an unfavourable sense, of Pilsudski's opponents at home and in the United States.

PILSUDSKI'S RIFLEMEN

But Pilsudski's "army" was growing; in 1913 there were nearly two hundred groups of his Riflemen—the *strzelcy*—in Galicia as against half as many of the other Riflemen—the *druzyniacy*. The *Strzelec*, a military review, was being published at Lwow. In the beginning of 1914 Pilsudski went to Paris to inspect a body of his Riflemen which had been formed there, and he took advantage of the occasion to put his plans before some prominent men belonging to the parties of the Left in France, but he failed to make much impression on them. He made, however, a memorable declaration in the course of a lecture he delivered in the hall of the French Geographical Society on February 21. He claimed the military movement in Poland to have the special importance of bringing once more the Polish Question into the international forum. Since 1904 the world had seen, he said, various conflicts settled by armed force. "The sword alone," he added, "decides the destinies of nations. A people which shuts its eyes to this fact would irretrievably compromise its future. It must not be that we are that people." Thus spake Pilsudski, and in less than six months afterwards he made good his words by taking the field against Russia.

THE WORLD WAR STARTS

Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914—the war which developed into that “universal war for the liberation of the peoples,” for which Mickiewicz, the great Polish national poet, had besought Almighty God, in the *Litanie des Pèlerins polonais*, “by the wounds, tears and sufferings of all the slaves, exiles and pilgrims of Poland.” By August 12 the five greatest Powers of Europe were involved in the struggle. At first the full weight of the German onslaught fell on the Western Front; in the belief that the Russian mobilization would be slow the Germans kept a comparatively small army of observation on the Eastern Front, and left the principal assault in that area to the Austrians. Pilsudski was on the watch, and on the very day that Austria declared war on Serbia the Provisional Committee of the Confederated Independentist Parties issued at Cracow a proclamation addressed to the Polish nation appealing to it to enter into the war against Russia, which Pilsudski was sure was coming. Germany declared war on Russia on August 1, but Austria did not do so till August 6.

PILSUDSKI OCCUPIES KIELCE

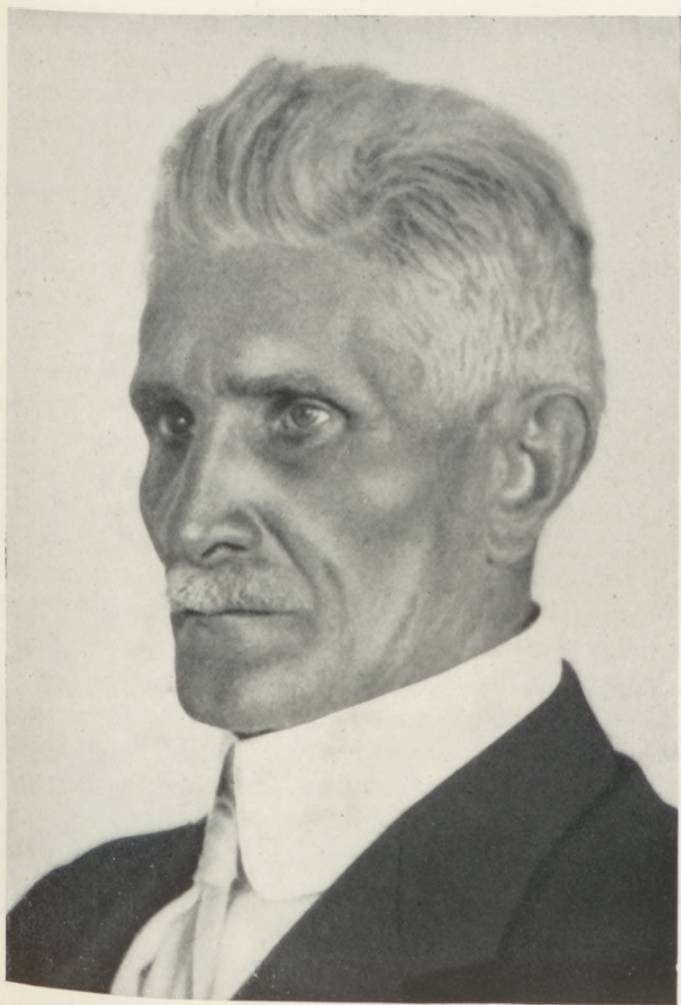
Pilsudski was busy making his preparations, and trying to get up-to-date arms for his Riflemen from the Austrian military authorities, but in vain. His organization was such that he could have put into action 4,000 men, but the Austrians hesitated, and time passed. On August 5 under pressure of circumstances the rival corps of Riflemen were united, and Pilsudski formed his first fighting troops into a company composed of 98 *strzelcy* and 74 *drużyniacy*, armed with Mannlicher repeating rifles. With this small force he crossed the frontier between Austrian and Russian Poland in the early hours of August 6, and reinforced, but with men armed with old rifles, he occupied the town of Kielce, about 75 miles north-east of Cracow and well into Russian Poland. Pilsudski made an effort to organize the civil power in the district, Miechow, which he held, but

this state of things did not last long, as the Austrian authorities put a summary end to it. The seizure of Kielce annoyed them, as they had made a different plan of campaign for Pilsudski, and they decided that he must either dissolve his corps of Riflemen or permit them to be joined up with the Austrian *Landsturm* and take the same oath as the Austrian reservists. "If they force me to do that," said Pilsudski to Daszynski, whom he had appointed assistant military commissary, "nothing will be left but for me to shoot myself."

Events took another turn, for on August 16 there was created at Cracow a new body called the *Naczelny Komitet Narodowy* (Supreme National Committee) which protected Pilsudski and his Legion, as his force was called, from the Austrians. The raid on Kielce was destitute of serious military significance, but was important politically, as the boldness of the venture appealed to the imagination of many Poles who felt that there was once more a Polish Army, small though it was, in the field against the oppressor. The name Legion, too, had a magic of its own, as it recalled the valour of the Polish Legions that fought under Poniatowski for Napoleon and under Pulaski for American Independence. The fame of Pilsudski was magnified among the Polish masses, and the foundations laid of that devotion of his soldiers to him which he was never to lose. As for himself, he had at any rate a *fait accompli* to show in accordance with his policy. He returned to Cracow on August 20, and on hearing from Daszynski what the Supreme National Committee was doing, said to him that his life was saved.

CACOW CURRENTS

This Committee was scarcely homogeneous, however, in its membership, as it was made up of representatives of all parties, including National Democrats. The Provisional Committee of the Confederated Independentist Parties was dissolved, together with the Committee at Lwow which the National Democrats had dominated. The Supreme National Committee unanimously decided to fight against Russia, and to organize the Legions under the Austrian High Command; it began



M. IGNACE DASZYNSKI

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negotiations at once with the Austrian Government respecting them. On August 22 Pilsudski told his men that he had recognized the political authority over them of the Supreme National Committee, and in the beginning of September 5,000 legionaries at Cracow and Kielce took the oath demanded by the Austrian military authorities, but he was not altogether satisfied with the situation. The Committee had requested Austria to give guarantees of a national character to the Legions, but all that it got was that on August 27 the Archduke Frederick, the Austrian Commander-in-Chief, ordered two Austrian generals of Polish origin to form two Polish Legions for the duration of the War, without badge or national flag, though Polish was to be the language of command. The Archduke further prescribed: "The groups of volunteer Light Infantry soldiers at present in the Kingdom of Poland (Congress Poland) under the command of M. Pilsudski (*sic*) are enrolled as the first Regiment of the First Legion."

With his entire devotion given to Poland and not to Austria, Pilsudski had no desire to be controlled by the Poles who were Austrophil, and he felt that his hands were tied too much, but he could not fail to see that the Austrian connexion gave to his troops certain advantages—equipment, pay and the like, which they could not otherwise obtain. On the other hand, he could not but know of the failure of the efforts made by Bilinski and Bobrzynski, two leading Austrian Poles in close touch with Vienna, to induce the Emperor Francis Joseph to issue a manifesto announcing large concessions to the Poles: the Emperor had been willing, but had given way when confronted by Tisza's determined opposition.

POLISH MILITARY ORGANIZATION

To give himself greater freedom Pilsudski now formed a new body called the *Polska Organizacja Narodowa* (Polish National Organization) to act in Russian Poland analogously to the Supreme National Committee in Austrian Poland, and to serve also as a link with the German forces then advancing into Russian Poland. At the same time Pilsudski created, but in

secret, another body, the *Polska Organizacja Wojskowa* (Polish Military Organization), whose activity was at first limited to that part of Russian Poland still in the possession of Russia. Through this organization he communicated effectively with those members in Warsaw of his corps of Riflemen who had not been caught in the sweeping net of the Russian mobilization. The information thus obtained was passed on to the German Command, who also received news from some courageous young women regularly traversing the front between Warsaw and Dombrowa, where the Intelligence Department of Pilsudski's First Legion was situated. But relations with the Germans became strained, and were finally broken off in November.

In the same month the headquarters of the Supreme National Committee moved from Cracow, which was now too close to the front, to Vienna, and the Polish National Organization was dissolved, its heads being absorbed into the Committee, a process which rendered that Committee more acceptable to Pilsudski. When he arrived in Vienna in November it made him the guest of honour at a banquet, over which Jaworski presided. In responding to the toast of his health proposed by Jaworski he said that he would leave politics to the Committee, but he himself would take charge of the fighting in the field; this division of labour did not last very long.

Two months previously the Russophils had broken away from the Committee for various reasons, among them being their opposition to any accommodation with the Germans, a stand that lost nothing from the fact of the victorious Russian advance in Galicia. This secession of the Russophils might be said to clear the air, so far as Polish politics in Austrian Poland were concerned. The Independentists of Pilsudski and the Austrophils, including the Cracow Conservatives and others, practically formed a single camp to which the name of Activist was given. On December 31, 1914, the Austrian Government gave permission to the Supreme National Committee to pursue its policy in that part of Russian Poland occupied by Austrian forces, and to enlist recruits in it for the Legions. This was like a gage of battle thrown in the face of the Russophils.

RUSSIAN POLAND

In Russian Poland a decided majority of the Poles cast in their lot with Russia when the War broke out; anti-Russian sentiment was not altogether lacking, but naturally it kept underground, and was not particularly articulate. There was no attempt to interfere with mobilization; on the contrary, it was furthered by many Poles who fancied they saw in Russia the destined deliverer of all the Slavs from the Central Powers, especially from Germany, whom Dmowski had pictured as their most formidable adversary. In Petrograd on August 8, 1914, Meysztowicz, a Polish member of the Council of the Empire, and Jaronowski, a Polish deputy in the Duma, declared that the Poles would repel the *Drang nach Osten* of the Prussians, in the hope that the shedding of their blood, and their endurance of sufferings in the struggle, for them a fratricidal one, would lead to the unification of the Polish nation of the three partitions. This language found an echo in Warsaw which, as it were, swelled into a mighty chorus of rejoicing when on August 14 the Grand Duke Nicholas, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies, issued from Petrograd the following proclamation:

Poles! The hour has sounded when the sacred dream of your fathers and forefathers can come true. A century and a half has passed since the living flesh of Poland was torn in pieces, but her soul is not dead. It lives in the hope that the hour will come in which resuscitated Poland will reconcile herself fraternally with Great Russia. The Russian troops bring to you the happy news of that reconciliation. May the frontiers disappear that divide the Polish people, thus making of them a unity under the sceptre of the Emperor of Russia! Under that sceptre Poland will be born again, free in religion, in language, and in self-government (autonomy). Russia expects from you equal consideration for the rights of the nationalities with which history has linked you. Great Russia comes to meet you with open heart and brotherly hand. She is convinced that the sword which struck the enemy at Grünwald (Tannenberg) is not yet rusted. From the shores of the Pacific to the Northern seas the Russian regiments are advancing. It is the dawn of a new life for you. May there shine resplendent in that dawn the sign of the Cross, the symbol of the Passion and the Resurrection of peoples!

This manifesto was taken at its face value by most Poles in Russian Poland, and aroused the greatest enthusiasm among

them. Nothing in the least approaching such a statement in warmth of tone on the part of Russia had ever been heard by the Poles before, and it was small wonder that it made a deep impression on the great majority. On August 17 the *Gazeta Warszawska* (Warsaw Gazette) showed the general acceptance with which it met when it published the declaration that had been made in response by four of the Polish political parties in Russia. The declaration said:

The representatives of the undersigned political parties assembled on August 16, 1914, in Warsaw welcome the proclamation of His Imperial Highness, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, as an act of cardinal historical importance, and believe firmly that after the end of the War the promises expressed in the Proclamation will be fully realized, that the dreams of our fathers and forefathers will come true, that the body of Poland torn in pieces a hundred and fifty years ago will join together, and that the frontiers that now separate the Polish nation will disappear. The blood shed by Poland's sons in the common fight against Germany will at the same time be a sacrifice on the altar of resurrected Poland.

NATIONAL DEMOCRAT PARTY
POLISH PROGRESSIVE PARTY
REALIST POLITICS PARTY
POLISH PROGRESSIVE UNION

DMOWSKI'S SUCCESS

What a triumph for the policy of Dmowski was the Grand Ducal manifesto! It expressly promised self-government to the Poles within the framework of the Russian Empire, with the free practice of their religion—Roman Catholicism, not Russian Orthodoxy—and their own language, which had so long been proscribed. The Realists, who had hitherto been opposed to the National Democrats, now associated themselves with them, as did the two other parties of the Right in Russian Poland. The proclamation went far beyond their expectations, and far beyond anything suggested to the Poles in the proclamations of the Austro-German High Command after the outbreak of the War and on the penetration of Russian Poland by some of their troops. The effect which had been intended was produced; most of the Russian Poles lined up under the Russian flag, though certainly not from any real love for Russia. A Moscow

paper hit the truth when it explained the pro-Russian attitude of the majority of the Poles under Russian rule by the fact that all Poles were hostile to Germany and the Germans, whom they considered the worst enemies of their country: the essence of Dmowski's teaching was that Germany was *the* enemy of Poland.

Russian Poles were now told to place no reliance on the promises made by the High Command of the enemy respecting great privileges and liberties to be given them in the future. They were also told, however, to discredit Polish organizations in the enemy country: "Everybody," said the *Gazeta Warszawska*, "who affirms that Austria, with the help of Germany, wants to reconstruct a Free Poland is simply a blind dreamer." By that time it was known in Warsaw that Pilsudski with his first legionaries was in Kielce, and later that the Supreme National Committee had been formed at Cracow. A voice was heard here and there in Russian Poland bemoaning the divergences of view among the Poles in general, and urging them to unity. Thus the *Kurjer Poranny* (Morning Courier) said on August 25, 1914: "The Polish family must endeavour to attain unity of opinion on the most important questions of the future of the nation. There ought to be no place for such sad affairs as that of Kielce." But these unfortunate divergences soon became more and more evident, though the various lights in which the proclamation was seen in Russia proper as regards Polish self-government might have given pause to the Russophiles—they were now coming to be called Ententophiles.

DIVERGENT POLISH VIEWS

These other divergencies, which could not pass unobserved by them, led to the creation of a standing Polish Delegation in Petrograd, the business of which was to watch all developments in Russia connected with the Polish Question, to tell the Russians everything about Poland and the Poles, and above all to state repeatedly and make it clearly understood by the Russians that the Grand Duke's proclamation opened the problem of Poland to the fullest extent. The delegation had six

members, three from the Duma and three from the Council of the Empire. On September 17, 1914, Balicki and Jaronski, both National Democrats, submitted to the Russian Staff a proposal for the organization of a Polish Legion, but it was not well received at first. A month later, however, permission was given for the formation of a company of Polish "partisans."

In the field the fortune of war was favouring the Russians; though they lost heavily in their campaign in East Prussia, they achieved a series of remarkable successes in Galicia, Lwow being occupied on September 4, 1914; three months later their advance threatened Cracow and most of Galicia had been overrun. During the fighting the First Brigade of Pilsudski's Legions played a distinguished part, notably at Krzywoploty in November and at Lowczowek in the following month, but it had to share the Austrian withdrawal. In October the Russians threw back the Germans from before Warsaw, and forced them to retire towards the frontiers of Silesia; Russian cavalry entered Silesia and cut the Posen-Cracow railway. In these victories, then, there seemed to be ample confirmation of the soundness of the policy of the Russophiles; the weakness of Austria appeared to be convincingly demonstrated, and the position of the Austrophiles looked correspondingly bad.

POLISH NATIONAL COMMITTEE

On November 25, 1914, the *Komitet Narodowy Polski* (Polish National Committee) was founded in Warsaw by the Russophiles, its aim being the "political organization of the Nation"; its most prominent member was Dmowski. Among other things, it took up the question of a Polish Legion with the Russian Army, induced the Command of the South-West Front to transform the partisans into a Legion, as a part of the regular forces of Russia, and opened recruiting offices for it in various towns throughout the country. The depôt of this Legion was at a place called Pulawy, and from this the corps came to be known as the Pulawy Legion. But before the end of the year the military situation had changed somewhat. The Germans struck at the Russian right flank and took Lodz; the Russians

on the south were pressed back from Cracow, and in the centre again had to retire towards Warsaw, after heavy and prolonged fighting; bloody battles took place before Warsaw, and it was not till well into the new year that the Germans were worsted and forced back, but not so far as before. The Eastern Front, like the Western Front, was stabilized during that winter—1914-15; the position in the field was inconclusive, but on the whole indicated a stalemate, and gave about equal encouragement to the supporters of the Austrian and of the Russian solutions of the Polish Question.

But the Russian solution was already prejudiced. In December, 1914, Maklakoff, the Russian Minister of the Interior, issued a confidential circular to the Governors-General of Russian Poland in which he stated that the proclamation of the Grand Duke did not apply to the "country of the Vistula," but referred only to the Polish territories which were not included in the Russian Empire, and which he might be able to conquer; there was to be no change in the political situation in the Vistula country, i.e. the Congress Kingdom. If this circular was not known at Warsaw at the time, the Poles there must have been disturbed by the policy adopted by the Russian Government in Eastern Galicia after its occupation, Russification being openly practised and Lwow, with its large Polish population, described as "old Russian soil." No Pole would admit anything of the sort; though a considerable proportion of the population of Eastern Galicia was Ruthenian or Ukrainian, all Poles regarded that territory as inalienably Polish. A further and even more striking warning of the true intentions of Russia towards the Poles was given when on March 30, 1915, the Russian Government decided to separate the province of Chelm (Cholm) from the Congress Kingdom, an action against which every Pole could not but protest.

During the winter a swaying contest continued in the Carpathians, but the capture on March 22, 1915, of the Austrian fortress of Przemyśl, which had been besieged for months, was an undoubted success for Russia; it was, however, about the last of great importance she was to achieve. In the beginning

of May, 1915, the tremendous Austro-German offensive began on the Dunajec, in the south-west of Galicia, which drove the Russians out of almost the whole of Austrian Poland within a few weeks, and Hindenburg's armies pressed on towards Warsaw from the north and west. The Russophiles were in evil case; it remained to be seen whether, with the turn of the tide, the Austrophiles with the Independentists were in any better.

WESTERN OPINION

Absorbed in their own problems arising out of the War France and England paid little attention to Poland during the first months of the great struggle. As Russia was their ally, both thought of Poland, when they thought of her at all, in Russian terms; both had greeted with approval the proclamation of the Grand Duke, and they found it difficult to understand what was going on in Austrian Poland. On September 25, 1914, *The Times* published a long article, "from a Correspondent," which bore the headlines "Tragedy of Poland; A War of Liberation; Value of Polish Loyalty." The writer of this article strongly supported the Russian solution of the Polish Question; he lamented the blindness of the Austrian Poles, and stated that the Kingdom of Poland (Congress Poland) remained loyal; he exhorted the Russian Poles to pay no heed to "Austrian seducers," and spoke disparagingly of "certain Polish organizations which in the general excitement had lost their healthy sense of judgment." He quoted in full the Grand Duke's proclamation, which he said had been accepted not only loyally but with delight by the four Polish parties of the Right in Russia.

This article was a fair specimen of articles on Poland published in the Western countries at that time. In reply to a question, Sir Edward Grey (Lord Grey of Fallodon), Foreign Secretary, stated in the House of Commons on March 2, 1915, that the British Government was in sympathy with the proclamation; in the course of a speech on the conditions of peace, delivered some three weeks later, he spoke of the right of nations to "pursue a national existence, not in the shadow of

Prussian hegemony and supremacy, but in the light of equal liberty"—which was taken as referring to Poland. Apart from statements such as these, which were infrequent, Polish politics found scanty expression in England; there was more in France, where several thousand Poles had enlisted in her army, 2,000 volunteering in the first days of August, 1914, alone; but France had enough to do to attend to herself. The United States was in a position totally different from that of France and England, as it did not enter into the War till 1917, and at first its people as a whole did not greatly concern themselves with the political aspect of Polish affairs, but they soon began to feel their humanitarian appeal.

RELIEF FUNDS

Polish-American societies took the lead in raising funds for Polish relief, and in 1915 the Polish Central Relief Committee, with Paderewski at its head, was formed in America to combine and direct their activities. In January of that year Paderewski and Sienkiewicz, the great novelist, both well and most favourably known throughout Europe and America, established at Vevey in Switzerland the *Comité Général du Secours pour les Victimes de la Guerre en Pologne*, and the big American committee associated itself with this organization. Better informed than the French and English respecting the actual conditions in Poland, the American citizens contributed quickly and handsomely to the relief funds, for they realized how the hapless Poles were suffering as the tides of battle flowed and ebbed over their country—villages, farms and crops destroyed, factories looted, and multitudes of men, women and children left destitute, though the greatest, most appalling devastation—that of the Congress Kingdom—did not come till the summer of that year. Relief committees in Warsaw and Cracow did what they could to mitigate the distress in Russian Poland and Austrian Poland respectively, but their means were speedily overtaxed.

Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State of the Holy See, on

April 9, 1915, wrote a letter, on behalf of the Pope, to Mgr. Sapieha, the Prince-Bishop of Cracow, inviting the Polish episcopate to address an appeal to the universal Catholic Church asking for moral and material help for Poland in the "lamentable situation" to which the War had brought her. Gasparri's letter made it plain that by the Polish episcopate he meant all the Bishops of Russian, Austrian and German Poland. And with the letter went a contribution from His Holiness of 25,000 crowns, to be distributed, "with words of encouragement and hope," among the most urgent cases. In August, 1915, the Archbishops of Posen (Poznan), Lwow, Warsaw and Cracow made the suggested appeal, but by that date the military position on the Eastern Front had undergone that profound change already alluded to, and the sufferings and wretchedness of Russian, as well as of Austrian, Poland were infinitely greater than they were when Gasparri wrote. The miserable condition of the Poles in occupied territory had even impressed the Germans six months before; in February, 1915, a committee under Prince Hatzfelt collected money in Germany for destitute people in that region.

PADEREWSKI'S APPEAL TO ENGLAND

In such piteous circumstances an appeal made to the English people was certain of success; it was made doubly certain by a letter from Paderewski which was published in *The Times* towards the end of March, 1915, under the heading "A Plea for Poland." In his letter the great artist, after asserting that the "crime of Poland's partition was the cause of the War," went on to say that "from the ancestral shores of the Baltic Sea to the southern slopes of the Carpathians every truly Polish soul was moved with gladness and hope" by the Grand Duke's manifesto, and that "thousands of Polish soldiers had gladly given their lives for freedom's sake." Then he spoke of Polish needs—the cries of hunger from starving people!—and asked the generous English public for help. An important and influential body was soon established in London as "The Great Britain

to Poland and Galicia Committee"; its executive included Father Bernard Vaughan, John Buchan, the Rt. Hon. Charles B. Stuart Wortley, M.P., and Miss Laurence Alma Tadema, the last named acting as Honorary Secretary; by July 31, 1915, it had raised and remitted to Poland £45,000.

An indirect result of the various appeals for relief was that a larger share of public attention was given to Poland than for many years before in the West. That the Polish Question might again become international was even hinted when an organization claiming to represent several millions of Poles petitioned President Wilson at Washington in the spring of 1915 to work for a free and independent Poland, and Wilson replied that he "deeply sympathized with Poland."

CHAPTER II

THE AUSTRO-GERMAN KINGDOM OF POLAND 1915-1918

1

IN the summer of 1915 the colossal success of Mackensen's offensive in Galicia, with the reoccupation of Lwow by the Austrians on June 22, and Hindenburg's drives at Warsaw, which the Russians were compelled to evacuate on August 5, brought about a fresh development in Polish affairs. Counting German Poland in, a very large part of the former Polish territories was in the hands of Austria and Germany; it could be said that in a sense Poland under them was united again. The question of German Poland did not arise—Germany saw to that; Austria had regained Galicia; what they were to do with the rest was the problem they had to solve.

RUSSOPHIL HOPES DASHED

As regards the Polish Question generally the Russian solution, which had come into special prominence with the prosperous campaign of the Grand Duke Nicholas in Galicia during the preceding autumn and winter, dropped more and more into the background. How little the Russian Government—and for that matter the Polish Russophils—foresaw what was soon to take place in the field had been shown by the institution of a Polish-Russian Commission on June 19 at Petrograd for the purpose of preparing for the realization of the principles announced in the manifesto of the Grand Duke. The commission consisted of six Russians and six Poles, of whom Dmowski was one, with Goremykin, Russian Prime Minister, as president, and Kryshanowski, Secretary of State, as vice-president, and it held several sittings, which disclosed a Polish as distinct from a Russian attitude. It was wound up

in September, without reaching any decisions. By that month the worst had happened to Russia in the field.

Dmowski and other members of the National Committee founded in November, 1914, had withdrawn from Warsaw, and established themselves temporarily in Petrograd. In July, 1915, the Central Powers had offered peace on favourable terms to Russia, who had declined to accept it on any terms, and thereafter had suffered the most tremendous losses. French and British offensives on the Western Front, undertaken to relieve the pressure on the Russians in the east, proved extremely expensive and failed to achieve their object. The prospect for Russia, as for the Polish Russophils or Ententophils (*Orjentacja Koalicyjna*), was undeniably bleak, but as the Entente was not beaten, hope was not dead. Dmowski and his friends carried on as best they could for a while in Russia; early in the winter of that year the Russophil or now Ententophil leader transferred his energies to London, and started intensive propaganda work for the enlightenment of British opinion respecting Poland and his solution of the Polish Question.

AUSTROPHILS DISAPPOINTED

Meanwhile the Austro-Germans carried on in Poland as if neither the Entente Powers nor the Poles mattered any longer. The situation, as it developed, did not give the Austrophils more satisfaction than it did to the Russophils. Soon after the successful opening of Mackensen's campaign the Supreme National Committee returned from Vienna to Cracow, and three days after the fall of Warsaw was emboldened, by that event, to issue a proclamation in which it said that while the Poles must continue to fight Russia, they must make it clear that their aim in the War was the establishment of a Polish State. The Congress Kingdom (just taken from Russia) would now, it declared, have to play the most important rôle. "We recognize that," said the Committee, "and we await the moment when Warsaw, the heart of Poland, will guide the Nation." But no sooner was the proclamation published in

the Polish papers than the Austrian authorities retaliated by placing them under the severest censorship.

A request by the Committee addressed to Austria pleading for the establishment of a Polish State in union with Austria-Hungary had been mercilessly refused some three weeks before by Burian, Foreign Minister of the Dual Monarchy. The truth was that Vienna could do nothing without an arrangement with Berlin, and as anything like a definitive agreement favourable to Austria was lacking, the hopes of the Austrophils were vain. There was one Pole who saw this and saw it clearly. It was Pilsudski. He and the Independents had been collaborating with the Austrophils, though not without recurring dissensions regarding recruiting for the Legions in the occupied parts of Russian Poland; Pilsudski wished this recruiting stopped, but in this was opposed by Sikorski, the head of the Military Department of the Supreme National Committee, who thought that a million recruits for the Austrian Army could be got from the Congress Kingdom, an estimate that did not escape the notice of the German High Command, as was afterwards plain.

PILSUDSKI DENOUNCES GERMANY

As soon as Pilsudski heard of the proclamation of the Supreme National Committee, and knew that it was sending some of its members to Warsaw, he immediately decided to go there. Leaving the front secretly, he arrived in Warsaw on August 15, 1915, having met on the way several German regiments on the march eastward, and thus seeing with his own eyes abundant evidence of the military power of Germany. Next day he attended a meeting in the flat of Sliwinski, among those present being Thugutt, Michael Sokolnicki, and other leading men of the Polish Left in the Congress Kingdom. Pilsudski spoke at great length on the situation, dwelling chiefly on the differences between himself and the Supreme National Committee, the lack of good faith on the part of the Central Powers on the Polish Question, and the undesirability of getting

fresh recruits, in such circumstances, for the Legions, as that would be contrary to the interests of the Nation.

In *Wspomnienia Legjonowe* (Recollections of the Legions) a work presenting a history of the force, B. Wieniawa-Dlugoszewski stated that Pilsudski's remarks were received with amazement by the others, one of whom said to him: "If we do what you wish we will simply be playing the game of the Russophils!"

"To-day," Pilsudski replied, "the Germans have taken the place of the Russians in Poland. We must resist the Germans. I do not see why we should not enter into relations with the Russophils." That this largeness of view should bewilder his friends was not surprising; it was entirely new to them to think of co-operating with the Russophils; the idea did show something, however, of the measure of the stature of Pilsudski, his grasp of essentials, and his width of vision. He saw clear and far, and many of his associates were unable to attain his mental reach. But no *détente* took place between the Independentists and the Russophils. By request of the German authorities in Warsaw Pilsudski soon quitted that city for the country. At Otwock, not far from the capital, he received his friends, particularly Kasprzycki, the new head of the secret Polish Military Organization he had created during the previous year for action in Russian Poland. Having arranged to oppose the Germans covertly he returned to the front.

What the Germans really meant to do no one knew; indeed, they did not themselves know at the time. About a fortnight before Bethmann-Hollweg, German Chancellor, had alluded in the Reichstag to Poland, but had nothing more definite to promise her than the "dawn of an evolution which should for ever efface the ancient rivalry between Germans and Poles." In the beginning of September, 1915, the Independentists published at Warsaw a long statement, which carefully omitted all mention of the Supreme National Committee, but proclaimed to all the world the great qualities of the Legions, and the high esteem in which Commandant Joseph

Pilsudski was held. It closed by saying that if it was desired that the population of the Congress Kingdom should take part in the struggle against Russia, the indispensable condition was that the Legions, the core of the Polish Army, must be reunited on Polish soil, under the command of a Polish Chief who had the confidence of the nation, that this army should be autonomous, and that recruiting for it should be undertaken only by Polish authorities.

POLAND PARTITIONED AGAIN

What occurred next was that the Central Powers made a new partition of Poland between themselves, Germany taking the northerly part of the Congress Kingdom occupied by her troops, Warsaw being fixed on as the seat of its government, and Austria taking the southerly part of the Kingdom occupied by her troops, with Lublin as its centre. This division of territory was confirmed by a Convention drawn up and signed on December 14, 1915, at Teschen (Cieszyn), by Austria and Germany. General von Beseler was German Governor-General at Warsaw, and General von Kuk Austrian Governor-General at Lublin.

Representations made by Pilsudski and others to the Supreme National Committee were without effect, and the growing differences between it and the Independentists were stressed by the creation at Warsaw on December 18, 1915, of a new organization called the *Centralny Komitet Narodowy* (Central National Committee), two of its best-known members being Sliwinski and Thugutt, but a complete rupture did not take place till some months later, and the Committee's propaganda for recruiting went on. Attention was focused on the Legions. Of these there were two brigades in the field co-operating with the Austrian forces; the first was commanded by Pilsudski, and the second by Joseph Haller, who, after serving for fifteen years as an officer of the Austrian Army, had resigned his commission in 1914, and taken an active part in organizing the Legions. A third brigade was formed towards the end of

1915, under the command first of Grzesicki and then of Roja. The first brigade operated in Galicia, the second in the Carpathians and the Bukovina, but it was the former, under Pilsudski's leadership, whether from the military, moral or political point of view, that was the more prominent in Polish or Austro-German eyes. In November, 1915, the three brigades came together in Volhynia as a single force under General Puchalski, an Austrian of Polish descent. The total strength of the Legions was approximately 12,000 men—8,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry and 3,000 artillery with 36 guns—in the beginning of 1916. When compared with the enormous armies of the Great War it was a small force, but in that vast struggle with its many conflicting aims it pursued one aim alone—the independence of Poland—and its singleness of purpose gave it a moral and political value out of all proportion to its military strength.

DISCONTENT OF THE LEGIONS

The legionaries murmured that they were being treated, not as Polish, but as Austrian soldiers: "more and more," wrote one of them, "we are becoming Austrian troops," and this, so contrary to all the hopes that had inspired them, created a great and ever-growing discontent among them, especially in the First Brigade, in which, however, confidence was felt that Pilsudski would somehow win out in the end. The absolute trust they put in their leader was demonstrated by officers and men, each according to his rank giving a fixed proportionate sum from his monthly pay to him for political objects, according to his discretion, which was never questioned. Concerning this the legionary (Lipinski in his *Szlakiem I-ej Brygady*—On the Route of the First Brigade), quoted above, said: "We know not whether we shall obtain the independence of Poland as the price of our sufferings. It is not for the soldier to reason; that is the business of the Commandant. The soldier gives his blood, the Commandant his nerves and his brain."

As for Pilsudski himself, he swung, like a man over a chasm, between two loyalties—loyalty to his military oath to the

Austrian authorities and his loyalty to Poland as a patriot. Writing to Daszynski he stated that he had decided that unless the situation soon changed he would feel obliged to ask the Austrian Emperor to free him from his oath, and that he must continue to oppose fresh recruiting for the Legions, as he could not be a party to increasing the number of unfortunate men who had cause to regret their joining them. In July, 1916, the moment came in which he took the final decision, and until then he fought on at the head of his brigade, which with the two other brigades distinguished itself in the most heroic manner in the battles of the previous month when the Russians under Brusiloff resumed the offensive.

A good deal had happened in the meantime. On March 25, 1916, the Central National Committee, as a distinctively Pilsudkist organization, addressed what was in effect an ultimatum to the Supreme National Committee at Cracow. It said that in the Congress Kingdom the view was fairly general that the Polish Question would be resolved at Berlin, perhaps even without the slightest reference to Vienna. It drew attention to the military merits and achievements of Pilsudski, and demanded to know why it was that the chief command of the Legions had not been given to him; unless that was done, the Congress Kingdom could not be counted on to support the Legions; if it was done, then there would be a guarantee that the blood of the Legions would not be shed to no purpose. Failing his appointment, the only thing left would be to dissolve the Legions.

The Austrophils of Cracow made no direct reply, and the split became complete between them and the Independentists, who then included Socialists, Populists (members of the *Ludowy* or People's Party, analogous to the German *Volkspartei*) and democrats, other than National Democrats, throughout the Congress Kingdom. An indirect reply, however, was made by the *Liga Panstwowosci Polskiej* (League of the Polish State), an Austrophil body within the Kingdom, which asserted that if the policy of the Supreme National Committee showed any weakness it would be a terrible blow to the national cause, and

that all pressure on the Committee should be withstood no matter whence it came. The League further said that no heed should be paid to the threatened dissolution of the Legions as such a catastrophe was absolutely impossible, for both reason and sentiment were opposed to it.

POLISH QUESTION INTERESTS THE WORLD

Before and while these unfortunate exchanges were taking place the Polish Question was beginning slowly, though surely, to interest the world. A sign of this was a significant motion tabled towards the end of 1915 in the Italian Parliament, which among other things "expressed the most ardent wishes that the very noble Polish nation, which had been for centuries an important factor in civilization, defending Europe from Tartar and Turkish invasions, and destined in the future to fill a great rôle in the stabilization of peace, should be reconstituted as a unity in a free and independent State." As it was thought that the motion might embarrass the Allies, it was not pressed, but it remained on record, and was not forgotten by the Poles. A few days later Bonar Law, Colonial Minister in the Coalition Government of Great Britain, referred obliquely to the Polish Question when in his remarks on peace terms he asked: "Is there any member of this House (of Commons) who believes for a moment that Germany will restore Alsace to France, or will restore Poland to the nationality to which she belongs, unless she (Germany) is beaten?"

GERMAN VIEWS

Almost at the same moment Germany was doing something which she thought would please the Poles, for she reopened the Polish University of Warsaw and also established a Polish polytechnic in the capital of the Congress Kingdom. In the Reichstag Bethmann-Hollweg took credit for both of these acts—which were denounced in the Duma, on its assembling in February, 1916, by Sazonoff as traps for the Poles; he also spoke against the idea of creating a Polish Army in the Congress

Kingdom occupied by the Central Powers, and reaffirmed Russia's desire to unify Poland and recognize her autonomy. He reminded the Russian Poles of the oppressive manner in which the German Poles had been treated by the German Government—a rather bold-faced thing to do considering the past actions of the Russian Government in Russian Poland. Well in accordance with Russian diplomatic methods secret instructions were sent, within a fortnight after this speech, to Izvolsky, Russian Ambassador at Paris, to the effect that the Polish Question was to be excluded from subjects of international discussion, and that he was to place every obstacle in the way of putting the future of Poland under the control or guarantee of the Powers.

Shortly before this proceeding Dmowski, abandoning his programme of an autonomous Poland within the Russian Empire, presented a memorandum to Izvolsky in which he maintained that Poland must be an independent State, and he sent a copy to each of the Allied Governments. Its conclusion was: "The interest of all nations threatened by the power of Germany demands that the now divided Polish territories shall be united in one State, which ought to have the possibility of the free organization of its national forces in order to oppose them to the growing German menace. The Poles, who constitute a nation which as regards numbers and development is on a higher plane than all other nations of Central Europe and the Balkans, have an equal right to exist in an independent State, and they cannot renounce a right which other nations fully recognize." It might have seemed that as Dmowski and Pilsudski had now reached common ground they would be able to collaborate; but Pilsudski was still bound by his connexion with Austria, and probably the personal enmity between them was too deep to be readily bridged.

BRITISH VIEWS

In April, 1916, Bethmann-Hollweg said in the Reichstag that in entering the War neither Austria nor Germany had

any intention of reopening the Polish Question, but the "fate of battles" had put it once more on the carpet, and that Germany and Austria would solve it; he did not say what precise form the solution would take. In reply Asquith (afterwards Earl of Oxford and Asquith), British Prime Minister, dealing with the Chancellor's claim that Germany would insist in the peace terms on giving the various races the chance of "free evolution, along the lines of their mother tongue and of national individuality," said that he supposed this principle was to be applied on approved Prussian lines to Poland as well as Belgium. He recalled some of the illuminating experiences of the Poles respecting the meaning Berlin attached to "free evolution along the lines of the mother tongue," and went on to say: "The attempt to Germanize Prussian Poland has been for the last twenty years at once the strenuous purpose and the colossal failure of Prussian domestic policy. . . . The use of the Polish language in schools was restricted until it was allowed for religious instruction alone, and finally even this concession was withdrawn, and the little Polish children had to learn to say their prayers in German. The wholesale strike of the children" (in 1902, when more than half of the Polish school-children in German Poland went on a strike which lasted nearly the whole of the school year), "the barbarous floggings that were inflicted on them, the arrests and imprisonment of their mothers, form a black chapter even in the annals of Prussian culture."

FRENCH VIEWS

In France, too, a growing concern was being manifested for Poland. In May, 1916, a French mission, headed by Viviani and Albert Thomas, arrived in Petrograd, and one of its objects was to obtain from the Russian Government definite proposals in favour of Poland; in this it not only failed, but it was warned that even the most discreet appearance of intervention on the part of France in Russia's policy towards the Poles would be a positive danger to the Franco-Russian Alliance.

This was not made public till much later, and Sazonoff adopted a different tone in an interview he gave to the Petrograd correspondent of *The Times* on May 27, when he stated that the Poles would receive a "just and equitable autonomy in the greatest degree adjusted to their future life," and might look forward to the "dawn of a new era." He also said that the Tsar had authorized that subscriptions should be taken up for and help sent to the Poles living in the territory occupied by the German and Austrian forces. It would have been more to the point, however, if he had mentioned what was being done by his Government to relieve the distress of the Poles, upwards of a million in number, who had been forcibly evacuated into Russia by the Grand Duke Nicholas before his retirement from Warsaw. This compulsory exodus was one of the most agonizing features of the Russian retreat, and few people in the West had the slightest idea of its horrors; many of these Poles perished miserably in the interior of Russia. The plight of the Poles in the occupied territories was sufficiently grave to call for all the help they could get from any quarter.

PLIGHT OF THE POLES

Their condition had been bad in 1914-15, but it was infinitely worse in 1915-16, in Russian Poland, which had been devastated, in imitation of the tactics that had baffled Napoleon, by the Russians—without similar military success, but necessarily inflicting the greatest loss and suffering on the resident population. Famine stalked the wretched countryside, and was not relieved by the Germans, who, on the contrary, were accused, in the Allied Press, of "taking food out of starving Poland," as in *The Times* of February 24, 1916; the same journal spoke in June of "German-made misery in Poland." The Germans denied the allegation, but in *Ludendorff's Own Story*, that general said: "Naturally, we continued to make . . . use of the country for the prosecution of the War." As naturally, the Allies objected to the importation of supplies into Poland by outside agencies except on terms to which the Germans

would not agree. Thus the noble activities of Hoover and the Relief Commission were defeated. Towards the end of July, 1916, the Germans stated that the prospect for an excellent harvest was so satisfactory that foreign relief for Poland was unnecessary; this brought the negotiations, which had been pressed on the Allies and on Germany by the American Government, still a neutral, to a close, so far as relief on a large scale was concerned; but private efforts still continued, and did much good.

POLISH PROPAGANDA IN ENGLAND

All these relief activities, like those of the preceding year, inevitably directed attention to the Polish Question in its political aspects, and more was heard of its possible solution in the re-creation of an independent State of Poland, not only in the United States, but also among the Allies, where not a little propaganda in this sense was at work. Other Poles, besides Dmowski, vigorously promoted the Polish cause in London. The first work for Poland in England was the formation of a Polish Information Committee by Casimir Proszynski a few weeks after the beginning of the War. The aim of the committee was to help in the release of Poles interned in England; it was held that Poles taken prisoners while fighting in the armies of the belligerents were not enemies of the Allies, and if set free would be eager to fight against the Central Powers which had partitioned Poland. The committee received a great impetus when August Zaleski, a representative of the Activists, and afterwards Polish Foreign Minister, arrived in London early in 1915.

A graduate of the University of London through its School of Economics, he knew England well and spoke English perfectly. Soon he gathered round him a number of capable men, the most prominent being Dr. Rajchman, in after years Chief of the Hygiene Department of the League of Nations. A propaganda campaign was commenced in Great Britain in favour of Poland. In 1915-16 a weekly news sheet called

the *Polish News* was published for the purpose of giving the British Press important information about the position of Poland in the War. Extracts from articles taken from papers in many languages provided a service of news much appreciated by the editors of British journals at the time. In conjunction with J. C. Witenberg, Zaleski also started the *Polish Review*, a quarterly edited by J. H. Harley, but this was rather later—1917-18; it had a very large sale in the United States, being read, according to letters received, by various leading Americans, the most notable being President Wilson himself. No doubt it exercised considerable influence, as many Polish writers of eminence contributed to it. In addition to their Press campaign Zaleski and his friends held many important public meetings on behalf of the cause.

PILSUDSKI RESIGNS LEGION LEADERSHIP

In England and in the West in general there was thus a much fuller and more sympathetic understanding of the Polish case when the Austro-Germans at last came to an agreement respecting what they were to do with Congress Poland. Before that took place Pilsudski had resigned from the Legions. Nearly a year had elapsed since the Central Powers had driven the Russians out of Warsaw and Russian Poland, and unrest increased from day to day among the legionaries who were deeply disturbed because no definite decision regarding the Polish Question had been reached by these Powers. It looked as if nothing was going to be done, and as a marked protest, Pilsudski resigned his position as chief of the First Brigade on July 25, 1916.

Writing to Daszynski, he said that his struggle with his conscience was settled; he must be loyal to Poland, not to Austria, as matters stood. His resignation was not accepted at once by the Austrian High Command, as it was uncertain how to act. On August 6, the second anniversary of the entry into Russian Poland of the first legionaries, Pilsudski issued an order of the day to his troops which read: "Two years have passed since the day so dear to our hearts when the forgotten

flag of the Polish Army flew once more over Polish soil and proclaimed a fresh struggle for the fatherland. . . . The fate of the fatherland is still in doubt. But I permit myself to wish, for you and for me, that my order of the day on the next anniversary may be read to free Polish soldiers on the free soil of Poland!" Later in the month the "Council of Colonels," composed of Pilsudski, Haller and Roja, the chiefs of the three brigades, respectively, and Sosnkowski, chief of the Staff of the First Brigade, sent a memorandum to the Supreme National Committee, Cracow, declaring that the Legions must be regarded as a "Polish Army fighting and dying for the freedom of Poland," and requesting it to ensure that the Command of the Legions must be "distinct, Polish and responsible solely to Polish citizens and its own Government."

At the moment the Legions headed by Szeptycki, who had succeeded Puchalski, formed part of the forces under Bernhardt in the army group commanded by Lissingen, and the Germans watched the actions of Pilsudski with great suspicion. It was they who forced the Austrians to accept his resignation, which they did on September 27, 1916. Meanwhile the Austrian Command, yielding to the dissatisfaction in the Legions, had a week before sought to quiet it by transforming them into the *Polnische Hilfskorps* (Polish Auxiliary Corps) as a portion of the Austrian *Landsturm*, but under its own flag. The news of Pilsudski's resignation, now become effective, made them furious; in sympathy with the man who was the moral, if not the actual, head of them all, they demanded *en masse* to be permitted to lay down their arms and withdraw. On October 6 the Legions retired from the front and were stationed at Baranowicze.

Pilsudski went to live at Cracow, where Jaworski urged him to become once more the inspiration of the Legions, whose soldiers saw in him the "symbol of the struggle for independence." While thanking Jaworski, who, he said, was "one of the most eminent statesmen of Poland," for this communication, Pilsudski did not respond to the other's appeal, and the Central National Committee at Warsaw launched a bitter

attack on Jaworski's Supreme National Committee. The Legions were in a state approaching disintegration, but their hopes were revived when the Central Powers proclaimed the "Kingdom of Poland" on November 5, 1916.

CENTRAL POWERS NEED MORE MEN

Trouble with the Legions may have been one of the causes that led to this announcement, but the determining reason was that Germany and Austria needed more men in the field, and thought they could get them in Poland by this concession to Polish sentiment as was soon made clear, because the proclamation of the Kingdom was followed immediately by an invitation to the Poles to enroll themselves in the "Polish Army," as it was styled, euphemistically, by the Austro-German Governors, Beseler and Kuk. In the highest quarters both in Germany and in Austria opinion had been far from unanimous regarding the creation of any Kingdom at all, but what Ludendorff termed "ineluctable necessity," referring to the shortage of men increasingly felt by the German High Command, gained the day. In July Beseler had urged Berlin to establish a Polish State under German control, and estimated that 800,000 recruits would be induced thereby to join the armies of the Central Powers. This was a sufficient argument, and on August 12, Bethmann-Hollweg and Burian signed at Vienna a secret protocol, the terms of which were:

1. Poland to become an independent hereditary kingdom;
2. Rectification of frontiers in favour of Germany;
3. Exclusion of the Government of Suwalki from the Kingdom;
4. No independent foreign policy for the Kingdom;
5. Its army to be under Germany;
6. No part of German or Austrian Poland to be included.

Under this agreement the Austrian solution of the Polish Question went by the board. Early in October, 1916, Bilinski had communicated to the Polish Club in Vienna the decisions

come to by the Central Powers, but had added, as some compensation, that the autonomy of Galicia would be enlarged by the Austrian Emperor—a proceeding which, when made public, was resented in Berlin, where there was no intention of doing anything at all for German Poland. Towards the end of that month Beseler sent for Brudzinski, Rector of Warsaw University, and a foremost member of the League of the Polish State, the Austrophil organization in the Congress Kingdom. With Brudzinski were some other prominent Poles of the same political school, and they were asked by Beseler to elaborate a memorandum expressing the wishes of the Polish people. Accordingly this memorandum was written and presented to Bethmann-Hollweg in Berlin on October 28, and was taken two days later to Vienna and handed to Burian. Its chief statement was: "Though it is true that we are not the authorized representatives of Poland, we yet feel that we have the right to express in its name its unquenchable desire for the re-establishment of an independent Polish State. The circumstances brought about by the War demand an immediate proclamation by the Central Powers in which the fact is recognized that Poland is independent, with their full support."

In reply the German Chancellor stated that the Central Powers had resolved "to establish a Polish State, governed by a King and having a national army—a State bound to them especially from the military point of view." Its frontiers, he said, could be settled only after the conclusion of peace. In brief, he gave the substance of the proclamation published in Warsaw and Lublin on November 5 by the German and Austrian Governors of the occupied territory, transformed thereby into the Kingdom of Poland. The Poles received the proclamation with mixed feelings. In a speech Bilinski admitted that the programme of himself, Jaworski, and men of like mind—the Austrian solution—could not now be realized, but he found consolation in the creation of the new State, which, he declared, was in itself so great a matter as to blot out all divergencies of programmes. In German Poland the censorship suppressed any voicing of Polish opinion.

REACTIONS TO AUSTRO-GERMAN PLAN

Dmowski, in his book *Polityka polska*, noted that the creation of the Kingdom did more than anything else to inform the statesmen of Europe of the international importance of the Polish Question, and to stimulate them to regard it in a serious manner. But he and other Poles living in the Entente countries and in Switzerland issued a declaration to the effect that they considered the Austro-German proclamation "as a new sanction of the partitions" and the project of the Central Powers for raising a Polish Army "as a terrible disaster" for the fatherland. In Petrograd the Polish deputies in the Duma, while protesting against the acts of the Austro-German authorities in Russian Poland, took occasion to state that it was necessary for Russia and the Allies to announce their decision to unify all the Polish territories and erect them into an autonomous state. On November 15, 1916, the Russian Government published an official *communiqué* reiterating its intention to create a unified Poland which would have the right freely to organize its national, cultural and economic life on the basis of autonomy under the Russian sceptre. The Governments of the other Allies expressed their high appreciation of this Russian move.

As the War, on balance, still favoured them the Central Powers went on with their programme—the raising of a "Polish Army." But there was singularly little response on the part of the Poles, though most of the Activist groups supported, or appeared to support, the Austro-German call to arms. Pilsudski was once more watching carefully the progress of events and quietly reviewing the situation; the most he did was to tell the legionaries to "become soldiers again," but he did not encourage a general enlistment of Poles, although the *Deutsche Warschauer Zeitung*, Beseler's paper, said that the proclamation of November 5 "crowned the work of the great Polish patriot who was the true creator of the Polish Legions, and who would be the true father of the Polish Army."

COUNCIL OF STATE FORMED

Beseler had formulated in November a scheme for the creation of a Council of State and a Diet in the Kingdom, and it was published as an Order by Beseler and Kuk on December 6. On January 14, 1917, a provisional State Council was inaugurated in the Royal Castle at Warsaw. It was drawn from both Right and Left parties and consisted of 25 members whose names had been submitted to and approved by the German and Austrian sovereigns; among the number was Pilsudski, who was appointed head of the Military Commission which had been set up by the Council. On the ground that the Council of State had taken over the Legions, the Supreme National Committee voted its own dissolution on January 29; but with the disappearance of the Austrian solution it had already lost its *raison d'être*; it lingered on, however, in the shape of a sub-committee of liquidation till the middle of October, 1917.

The Germans had originally charged this committee with organizing enlistment stations throughout the country; the committee had failed them; they had less reason for trusting Pilsudski, and instead of permitting him and his Military Commission to recruit for the Polish Army, they started, under Beseler, the *Abteilung für Polnische Wehrmacht* (Department of Armed Polish Forces). The question of the Polish Army—the only thing that really continued to interest the Germans in the Kingdom—was the subject of constant debate in the Council of State for weeks after it had begun work. In March the Germans demanded that it should adopt a special form of oath for the Polish Army, binding the army to “fidelity in arms with the German and Austrian armies.” Here was the old stumbling block for the Poles; neither Pilsudski nor his Legions had any intention of taking that oath.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS

While the Germans were busy trying to raise a Polish Army, one of the great, outstanding events in modern history occurred:

the Russian Revolution of March, 1917, which resulted in the abdication of the Emperor Nicholas II and the complete disappearance of the Tsarist régime on the establishment of a provisional Government at Petrograd on March 16. Only one other event—the Russian Revolution of November, 1917—gave a wider horizon to the Polish Question. On December 25, 1916, in an order of the day to his armies, the Tsar had again announced that the constitution of a free Poland, made up of the three areas that had been partitioned, was a war aim of Russia. But as late as March 11, 1917, Briand, in a note to Izvolsky, admitted that it was understood by France that Russia had the most absolute liberty to fix at her own pleasure her frontiers—which meant that the Allies would have to endorse whatever action Russia took with respect to Poland, if they won the War, and Russia was still with them.

One of the first things done by the new Russian Government was to notify the other Allies and neutrals that it would respect the international engagements of the fallen dynasty. On March 28, 1917, it instituted a commission, with Lednicki as chairman, for liquidating affairs in Russian Poland, and on the following day issued the memorable proclamation in which it stated that Free Russia considered the creation of an independent and unified Polish State, attached to Russia by a free military union, as a sure pledge of a durable peace and a solid rampart against the pressure of the Germanic Powers on the Slav peoples. The proclamation was received with deep emotion by the Poles everywhere, striking evidence of its stimulating effect being shown by the daring posting of copies of it all over German Poland one night by persons unknown.

EFFECT ON POLISH QUESTION

On April 6 the Council of State at Warsaw hastened to express its gratification that the new Government of Russia recognized the independence of Poland. The French, British and Italian Governments applauded the Russian action; there was an idea, in fact, which had some currency, that the proclamation had

been inspired by England; what was more certain was that it owed a great deal to the representations of the Polish political groups in Petrograd and, most of all, to Lednicki, who drafted it in collaboration with Milyukoff, Russian Foreign Minister. In London Dmowski seized the opportunity to present a memorandum to Balfour, British Foreign Secretary, in which he maintained that as there was now no chance of a Russian solution of the Polish Question, and as the aim of the War was to reduce power to limits allowing the re-establishment of European equilibrium, an independent Poland was a necessity. He next pointed out that this Poland must be sufficiently large and strong to be certain of economic independence, with an outlet to the sea, if it was to take its proper place in Europe; it should consist of Galicia and Teschen from Austria, of Russian Poland, and of German Poland including Danzig.

In America the proclamation had a tremendous repercussion, as was to be expected seeing that Wilson, on January 22, 1917, had in a speech adumbrated the proposals afterwards embodied in his Fourteen Points, and had specifically referred to Poland: "Statesmen everywhere are agreed," he said, "that there should be a united, independent and autonomous Poland." Nor could the effect of the allusion have been lessened when the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917.

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Early in April, 1917, the Council of State at Warsaw found itself in a precarious position, because it was practically impotent through German interference or indifference to accomplish anything useful; the economic situation was bad both in the capital and at Lodz. In these circumstances the Council sent a statement to Beseler requesting definite action respecting the Polish Army, and the handing over to it of the administration of justice and public instruction, as well as a share in regulating the food supplies of the country. But it got no satisfaction. On April 10 the Austrian Emperor, Charles (Francis Joseph,

his predecessor, had died on November 21, 1916), placed the Polish Auxiliary Corps (the Legions) under the orders of Beseler, who on the same day told the legionaries that they would form the basis of the Polish Army which was to be raised without delay.

The Council hesitated to comply with his demand that it should issue a call to arms, agreed to do so, and finally, moved by Pilsudski's urgent remonstrances, refused to publish the call. But the Council felt it had been over-bold, and when on May 1 Pilsudski proposed to his colleagues that they should offer their resignation in a body, the majority declined. As he could reach no agreement with the Council on recruiting, Beseler established enlistment centres of his own in the middle of May, but with little success. Another feature of that month was that all the Polish members of the Reichsrat, having met at Cracow on May 28, voted unanimously for a resolution submitted by Tetmajer which pronounced for an "independent and unified Poland, with access to the sea." Shortly before, the vast majority of the professors of the Universities of Cracow and Lwow had made a similar declaration.

PILSUDSKI RESIGNS FROM COUNCIL OF STATE

In June, 1917, the Council of State, which had temporarily ceased to function, resumed work. Matters were brought to a climax when, on July 2, Pilsudski and three other members resigned. In a letter Pilsudski said: "Up till now all attempts to form a Polish Army have had one characteristic trait in common, namely, the Central Powers have always endeavoured to exclude the intervention of any Polish organization. First, the Legions were incorporated in the Austrian Army; at present, according to the official text, they are associated with the German Army. The right to make decisions in this matter is therefore in alien hands. Such a state of things has given us a fictitious army, Austrian yesterday, German to-day. If the Central Powers have acted in this way in a spirit of benevolence, they are mistaken in supposing that it is possible to form a Polish

Army after that fashion. Since the Council of State, a Polish institution, can have no legal influence on the formation of a Polish Army, I, as representing that army, can no longer remain at my post in the Council." The reasons given by the other members who resigned resolved themselves into one: the impotence of the Council which made a continuance of its existence useless.

Left to itself the Council adopted the oath as required by Beseler and asked the Legions to take it, but Pilsudski secretly instructed them not to do so. Out of 6,000 belonging to Russian Poland 5,200 obeyed Pilsudski; they were immediately arrested by the Germans, disarmed and interned. The 800 who took the oath were transported to Ostrow, where the Germans were trying to organize a *Polnische Wehrmacht*; they contrived to get 1,373 "volunteers." At that time the Legions had consisted of 14,000 men; of the 8,000 who belonged to Austrian Poland, 3,000 were incorporated in Austrian regiments on the Italian Front, and the remaining 5,000 were reconstituted as the *Polnische Hilfskorps*, and, under Zielinski, sent to fight in the Bukovina.

PILSUDSKI ARRESTED

Pilsudski himself was arrested by the Germans on the night of July 21-22, 1917, and imprisoned in the fortress of Magdeburg; his friend Sosnkowski was arrested at the same time and later was also imprisoned with him in the same fortress. In Warsaw, Lodz and other centres the Germans arrested some members of Pilsudski's Polish Military Organization, which after some months of open action had again become a secret body in June; before his arrest, and in anticipation of it, he had handed over its command to another soldier friend, Rydz-Smigly; it was to prove its usefulness in the following year. Again Pilsudski's career seemed to come to an abrupt close, but he had at least made it certain that Germany was not to find in Poland the *Menschenmaterial* she needed so much. On August 25 the Council of State resigned; from start to finish it had been little better than a phantom—a piece of

political camouflage, and the Poles saw it go without regret. In September the Central Powers were ready with a new political device for the Kingdom.

With the quenching, temporary as it happened, of the greatest spirit in Poland and the eclipse of the Austrophil Poles, the field of effort for Polish independence was occupied more and more by the Poles abroad—in London, Paris, Switzerland and America, the men most in view being Dmowski in Europe and Paderewski in the United States. It was now the turn of the Ententophils. But the hands of the Allies were still tied to Russia. Thus when Poincaré, President of France, issued, at Paris on June 4, 1917, a decree for a Polish Army in France, it was in response to a report signed by Ribot and Painlevé which began: "The number of Poles already taking part in the struggle for the right and the liberty of peoples, or who can be enrolled for service in the cause of the Allies, is sufficient to justify their being united in a distinct corps. Further, the intentions of the Allied Governments, and in particular of the provisional Russian Government, regarding the restoration of the Polish State, cannot be better affirmed than by permitting the Poles to fight everywhere under their national flag."

The Allies were still governed by their engagements to Russia. None the less, the creation of this Polish Army in France was a notable triumph for Dmowski and the National Democrats, as it was associated distinctly with the *restoration* of the Polish State, and enthusiasts might give the phrase the utmost amplitude. Dmowski felt he could act more freely after the Russian proclamation of March 29, because it opened the way for organizing an official Polish representation in the Allied countries. On August 15, 1917, he became chairman of the Polish National Committee in Paris. The National Committee he had founded in Petrograd in 1914 was replaced in August, 1917, after a congress of Polish politicians in Russia, at Moscow by the Polish Council of the Union of Parties, and Wojciechowski was its president.

PULAWY AND OTHER LEGIONS

Pilsudski's Legions were not, as already noted, the only Polish Legions. The Pulawy Legion had fought valorously against the Germans in 1915; in the autumn of that year its strength had fallen from 30 officers and 1,500 men to 3 officers and 118 men, and it was reconstituted. Later the Russian authorities sanctioned the formation of a brigade of Polish infantry, which afterwards was given the status of a division. After the Russian Revolution of March, 1917, Kerensky, become Dictator, was unfriendly to the raising of a Polish Army in Russia, which was the desire of the great majority of the Poles in that country; the Socialists and democrats were against it, and they influenced Kerensky. In June, 1917, a general congress of Polish military delegates was held in Petrograd, and constituted the *Naczelny Polski Komitet Wojskowy* (Supreme Polish Military Committee) for the purpose of forming a national army in Russia.

It was estimated that there were then serving in the Russian armies upwards of 600,000 Poles, with 20,000 officers, of whom 119 were generals. At length Kerensky was induced to authorize the creation of a Polish Army corps in July. Its elements were got together at Minsk, and Wojciechowski's Council and the Military Committee entrusted its command to Dowbor-Musnicki, who at the Battle of Lodz in 1914 had proved himself one of Russia's best generals. A second Polish corps was organized about the same time in the Ukraine under Michaelis, a general who had commanded a Russian corps on the South-Western Front. The Russian Revolution of November, 1917, made abortive these and other Polish efforts in Russia to collaborate with the Entente against the Central Powers. Tragedy on tragedy was the lot of these, as of Pilsudski's, brave Legions.

POLISH NATIONAL COMMITTEE RECOGNIZED

In Russia the Poles threw up no such great figure as Pilsudski. In Western Europe Dmowski now played the leading rôle,

for which he was eminently fitted by his wide political knowledge, abundant energy, and oratorical power, combined with a thorough grasp of many languages. In July, 1917, he submitted to Balfour a lengthy and carefully composed memorandum entitled "Problems of Central and Eastern Europe"; it dwelt largely on the frontiers proper to the new free Poland he envisaged. From August, 1917, onward into 1918, when Dmowski visited America, Paris was the chief centre of his manifold activities. The Polish National Committee was recognized on September 20, 1917, by the French Government as an "official Polish organization," and Great Britain, Italy and the United States followed suit by December, 1917. Besides Dmowski, who was its president, the committee consisted of Maurice Zamoyski, vice-president; Joseph Wielowieyski, secretary-general and head of its military section; M. Seyda, head of the Press section; J. Rozwadowski, head of the publishing department; E. Piltz, delegate to the French Government; L. Sobanski, delegate at London; C. Skirmunt, delegate at Rome; F. Fronczak, representing the American Poles; and Paderewski, delegate at Washington.

In addition to the constant exposition of the Polish Question, Dmowski devoted much time and solicitude to the formation of the Polish Army in France. In Paris he met Benesh, the greatest protagonist of the Czechs next to Masaryk, and other leaders of the strong and increasing movement for the destruction of the Dual Monarchy; at first there were opposition and misunderstandings, but these were removed by the Russian Revolutions, and Dmowski co-operated with the Czechs and Yugoslavs. Of this collaboration Benesh, in *My War Memoirs*, wrote: "Dmowski was the strongest political personality among the Poles who were working in the Allied countries during the War, while Piltz, by reason of his moderation, did most to further the Polish cause in Paris. . . . Dmowski had many opponents, particularly in London where the chief of them was Mr. Lloyd George. This was due to his (Dmowski's) anti-Semitism, which he often exhibited rather ostentatiously, and his equally ostentatious nationalism. On the other hand,

however, he understood better than the other Poles that in order to achieve the Polish aims it would be necessary to destroy Austria-Hungary, and in this respect he was always consistently on our side."

It was not till 1918 that the diplomatists of the Allies abandoned the hope of detaching Austria-Hungary from Germany and committed themselves to the destruction programme. Before that came about Poland was treated as a counter for bargaining in the peace negotiations in 1917 associated with the Emperor Charles.

America was less bound in almost every way than were the Allies by European politics, and her Poles were much less influenced by factions and groups than were those of Europe. The Polish "National Department of Chicago" adhered to the Committee of Dmowski; Paderewski brought the committee to the notice of Lansing, American Secretary of State, and this led to its recognition. The Union of Polish Falcons (Sokols) voted at Pittsburg on April 4, 1917, for the formation of an "Army of Kosciuszko" which should "fight by the side of the United States for the liberty and independence of Poland." Recruiting for this force was affected by the Compulsory Service Law which Congress passed; about 100,000 American Poles served in the American armies. A Franco-Polish military mission, connected with the Polish Army being raised in France, arrived in the United States towards the end of August, and together with the Chicago National Department launched a great recruiting campaign among the Poles who were outside the "draft." Newton, American Secretary of War, gave it official countenance. About 20,000 men volunteered, and were trained at Niagara-on-the-Lake, in Canada, and at Fort Niagara, New York, but were not ready to join the fighting line till the summer of 1918.

POLISH REGENCY COUNCIL

Another stage in the short life of the Austro-German Kingdom of Poland was reached on September 12, 1917, when the two

Governors-General, Beseler and Kuk, published Letters Patent dealing with the development of the constitution of the Polish State. Some Poles in the Kingdom welcomed them as indicating real progress in the building up of the State; others again, chiefly the parties of the Left, regarded them with misgivings, and demanded the liberation of Pilsudski from Magdeburg and the release of the legionaries who had been interned, as an earnest of the good intentions of the Austro-Germans. On October 14, 1917, the Emperors William and Charles appointed a Regency Council for the Kingdom consisting of Kakowski, Archbishop of Warsaw (afterwards Cardinal), Prince Z. Lubomirski, Mayor of Warsaw, and Ostrowski, a country gentleman.

The new Council was solemnly inaugurated by Divine Service in St. John's Cathedral, Warsaw. But difficulties soon developed; the Regents suggested A. Tarnowski as Prime Minister, and Beseler vetoed his appointment, but approved Kucharzewski, their second choice. The first Cabinet was composed of Kucharzewski as Premier, with Stecki, Bukowiecki, Steczkowski, Ponikowski and others as Ministers. From the former Council the new administration inherited the Departments of Justice and Education already organized. The Department of the Interior was reconstructed. Everything that was done was, however, subject to revision or veto by the military Governors-General, who had absolute power in their hands. But the Regency Council and its Ministry did effect a certain consolidation of the country, not without value then and later.

RUSSIA ELIMINATED FROM THE WAR

November, 1917, was a month pregnant with happy fate for Poland, though that issue was utterly unexpected by all alike then and for many weeks later. The Russian Revolution of that month under Lenin, Trotsky and other Bolsheviks led to the practical elimination of Russia not only from the War but from contacts then with the Allied and Associated Powers, who thus were freed from taking her into account in their policies. The

disappearance from the general scene of Russia, coupled, of course, with the defeat of Germany and Austria, was the salvation of Poland, and enabled her to achieve her liberation. It must have been far otherwise if Russia had not become negligible. Russia, one arch-oppressor of the Poles, was gone. What might well appear incredible were it not absolutely true was the fact that it was Germany, the other arch-oppressor of the Poles, who, by forcing the Bolsheviks to make peace on her own terms, actually prepared the way for the eventual triumph of the Polish cause and the victory of the best—indeed the only definitive—solution of the Polish Question in restoring the State of Poland to its place among the States of Europe.

The Bolsheviks wanted peace, and Trotsky proposed on November 28, 1917, a general armistice. The Allies made no response, but the Central Powers did, and an armistice was arranged at Brest-Litovsk on December 15 for the Eastern Front. Negotiations commenced between the Austro-Germans, the Bolsheviks and the delegates of the Central Council (Rada) of the Ukraine, which on November 20 had constituted a Ukraine Republic, comprising the Governments of Kieff, Podolia, Volhynia, and five others in South-Western Russia. Early in January, 1918, the republic proclaimed its absolute independence. The Bolsheviks protested against the participation of the Ukrainians in the Conference, and withdrew from it on that and other grounds, with the result that the Ukraine obtained a peace treaty on February 9, 1918, which also gave it Chelm—to the great indignation of the Poles. The Central Powers had declined to allow the Regency of the Kingdom to be represented at Brest-Litovsk, and Czernin, well aware that Austria was menaced with starvation, justified the cession of Chelm by the plea that the Ukraine in return would supply corn and other provisions. The Regency Council publicly protested, and the Kucharzewski Ministry resigned in disgust on February 11. Poles denounced the treaty in the Reichstag, and the Polish Club in the Reichsrat withdrew its support from the Austrian Government. In the Bukovina Haller, in command of the infantry of the *Polnische Hilfscorps*, threw off

his allegiance to Austria, and after severe fighting and considerable losses succeeded in crossing the frontier with 4,800 men. These demonstrations did not move the Central Powers.

A short sharp campaign by the Germans soon brought the Bolsheviks to terms, and peace was concluded on March 3. In *My Life: the Rise and Fall of a Dictator*, Trotsky said that the treaty "saved the dictatorship of the proletariat," but it had other outcomes of less questionable value. For one thing, Russia was definitely out of the War, and for another the Allies were freed from their engagements to her, the cause of Poland gaining thereby immeasurably.

THE FOURTEEN POINTS

An Allied Conference held at Paris had come to a close on December 1, 1917, without arriving at a definite conclusion about Poland. On January 8, 1918, Wilson, in a message to Congress, had enunciated his Fourteen Points, the Thirteenth being: "An independent Polish State should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant." Three days previously Lloyd George had stated "that an independent Poland, comprising all those genuinely Polish elements who desire to form a part of it, is an urgent necessity for the stability of Western Europe." These statements showed a great advance in Western opinion regarding the Polish Question, and led the way to more specific declarations later; they would probably have been made earlier but for the terrible anxieties of the Allies in the spring of 1918, caused by the success of Ludendorff's thrusts on the Western Front.

POLISH LEGIONS ATTACKED

While the second Russian Revolution of 1917 was passing through its initial stages the Bolsheviks tried to Sovietize the

Polish forces in Russia, and failing in that attacked them. When Dowbor-Musnicki attempted to concentrate his scattered forces at Bobrujsk, they were set upon in detail and lost heavily. With 20,000 men he had to fight not only the Bolsheviks but the Germans, and finding himself nearly surrounded he decided to place his army under the protection of the Warsaw Regency Council. Most of the members of the delegation he sent to Warsaw with that object in view were murdered *en route* by the Bolsheviks, and the others returned to him. Much against his will he signed a "convention of neutrality" with the Germans, who some time later invited his corps to fight on the French front—an invitation he repelled with indignation, the upshot being the disarmament and demobilization of his troops on May 21.

The other considerable Polish corps—that under Michaelis in the Ukraine, with headquarters at Kieff—moved westward to the Dnieper under pressure of the Bolsheviks, and was presently joined by Haller and his men after their break with Austria, the total strength of this small army being 15,000 effectives. They concentrated at Kaniöff, some 140 miles from Kieff, with Haller in command, Michaelis, obeying an order of the Regency Council which Haller disregarded, having previously withdrawn with a fourth of the troops. On May 10 Haller was attacked by the Austro-Germans, and waged a magnificent but hopeless fight for four days—till the exhaustion of his supplies of food and munitions compelled a parley. Most of the Poles, including Haller himself, contrived to escape, but the rest were disarmed. Haller reached Moscow whence he went on to the Murman Coast, and for a short time cooperated with Poole, Commander of the North Russian Expeditionary Force. In response to a request of the Polish National Committee he embarked for France on July 2, 1918.

A third Polish force operated in the Kuban district, and a fourth in Siberia, but they were of relatively small importance; the notable thing about the fourth was that it acted in concert with the Czechoslovaks as well as with the anti-Bolsheviks. Under the direction of Masaryk, then in Russia, a Czecho-

slovak Army had been organized in Russia in 1917; it had to fight its way in 1918 towards Vladivostok.

NEW POLISH COUNCIL OF STATE

A week before the resignation of the Kucharzewski Ministry the Regency Council had promulgated a law creating a sort of Parliament called the Council of State. It was composed of 12 persons of importance, including the 6 bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in the Kingdom, the Lutheran Superintendent, the Chief Rabbi of Warsaw, and the Rector of Warsaw University; it had 55 elected members, and 43 nominated by the Regency Council; in all, 110 members. The elections were set for February 27. In a manifesto published in the official paper, the Regents declared their next step would be the formation of a *Seym* or Diet on a democratic basis. The elections duly took place, but the Council of State did not meet till late in the following June, sat for about five weeks, when the session was closed and it never reassembled.

On February 14, 1918, the Regents made a public protest against the cession of Chelm to the Ukraine, as stated above, and another Ministry was not formed till the end of the month, when a provisional Cabinet composed of functionaries was headed by Ponikowski, who had been Minister of Education in the Kucharzewski Government. The Regency Council stated that on account of Chelm it would henceforth base its authority on the Polish nation alone, but negotiations were carried on, probably not unknown to it, first between certain Activists in the Kingdom and the leaders of the majority in the German Parliament with the idea of establishing a Polish-German *modus vivendi*, and secondly by Steczkowski, who had held the portfolio of Finance under Kucharzewski. These pourparlers were protracted, but led to the formation on April 5 of a new Government with Steczkowski as Premier. The official journal stated that the Government would concern itself with the question of the frontiers, the creation of a Polish Army, and the consolidation generally of the Kingdom

as a State. It also spoke of measures for the recovery of industry and the increase of agricultural production.

It was the political and military questions which most agitated the Council and the Government, and they got scant satisfaction from Beseler regarding them; he told them with brutal frankness that the Polish Army was his business and not theirs. It was about this time—May, 1918—that the Emperors William and Charles decided to return to the Austrian solution of the Polish Question, but with a rectification of the frontiers of the Congress Kingdom in favour of Germany to satisfy the demands of Ludendorff, who in July following proposed to settle 300,000 German families and expel a similar number of Polish families from the territory to be annexed for his strategic requirements. About three months earlier the Poles in the Congress of the Oppressed Nationalities of Austria-Hungary at Rome—April, 1918—had read the situation clearly when, having accepted the main resolutions, they added a rider to the effect that they considered Germany the chief enemy of Poland, whose fate depended entirely on the result of the war against Germany.

ALLIES DECLARE FOR POLAND

Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Orlando, the respective French, British and Italian Prime Ministers, met at Versailles on June 3, 1918, and by request of the Polish National Committee made this statement: "The creation of a united and independent Polish State, with free access to the sea, constitutes one of the conditions for a just and durable peace and the rule of right in Europe." Under German pressure the Steczkowski Government on June 12 publicly declared that, unmoved by what had been said at Versailles, it would pursue its policy of collaboration with the Central Powers.

The opening of the Council of State had been postponed several times, but it did meet on June 22, and 98 members took part in its first session. The Council met fourteen times, and most of its discussions revealed such hostility to the Austro-

Germans on the part of many members that the German Commissary intervened and represented to the Regency Council and Steczkowski that the Council of State must not become a focus of agitation against the Central Powers—otherwise a painful situation would develop. The final session was held on July 31; the Council was to meet again in September; but the German armies were then retreating on the Western Front, and the political no less than the military situation was becoming totally changed for the Austro-Germans, as well as for their Kingdom of Poland, its Regents and Government. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the Regency Council did not do some good work in so far as its limited powers permitted; it certainly laid some of the foundations of the new Poland that was to come into existence within the next few but decisive months.

POLISH ARMY IN FRANCE

Dmowski's work for the Polish Army in France had met with great success. On June 22, 1918, in the presence of numerous Frenchmen and Poles of high distinction, among them being Pichon, French Foreign Minister, and Dmowski himself, the First Division of this army took the oath of service and received from the hands of Poincaré, French President, flags which had been presented by the municipalities of Paris, Verdun, Nancy and Belfort. The words of the oath were significant: "I swear before Almighty God, One in Three, to be faithful to my country Poland, one and indivisible, and to be ready to give my life for the holy cause of its unification and liberation. I swear to defend my flag to the last drop of my blood, to observe military discipline, to obey my leaders, and by my conduct to maintain the honour of a Polish soldier." Dmowski addressed the troops and told them: "You are entering the fight, not as many of our unfortunate brothers as slaves driven by foreigners in a foreign cause, but as free sons of Poland fighting for the liberation of your country, to win back your land from alien hands." Poincaré also spoke, and referring to the flags,

said they were emblems like the "glorious standards of Piast and Jagellon," and revived the heroic days when on oriflammes of red velvet the white eagle of Poland proudly spread its wings; "all the future of a nation is wrapped up in the folds of these flags. The white eagle can once more unfold its wings. It will soon float in the light of a sky once more serene and in the rays of victory."

The First Regiment of this Polish Army was sent to the front, and greatly distinguished itself on July 15 when Germany launched an offensive in Champagne. It left the firing line on August 17, and in the orders of the day the Commander of the French 21st Army Corps to which it belonged said of it: "The bearing of the First Regiment of Polish Infantry on the battlefields of Champagne is a sure pledge of the success which the whole of the First Polish Division will not be long in winning."

RECOGNIZED BY THE ALLIES

Shortly afterwards Dmowski went to the United States, where he joined hands with Paderewski. His work in Paris was continued by Zamoyski, acting chairman of the National Committee, who on September 28 signed an agreement with the French Government which stipulated, among other things, that the Polish armed forces formed an autonomous, allied and belligerent army, under the supreme political authority of the Polish National Committee, and with a Commander-in-Chief nominated by that Committee. General Haller was given this post. On October 11 Balfour, British Foreign Secretary, recognized the Polish Army as autonomous, allied and co-belligerent in a letter addressed to Sobanski, delegate of the Committee in London. In this communication Balfour said:

I need hardly assure you that the sympathies of this country have been and are with the people of Poland, of whatever politics, class or creed, in all the sufferings to which they have been subjected during the War. It admires their firm refusal to allow Germany and Austria-Hungary to dictate the future status and boundaries of their country, and it looks forward to a time when the present provisional arrangements

will come to an end, and a Poland free and united will shape its own Constitution according to the wishes of its people. That this happy moment may be near at hand is the most earnest wish of His Majesty's Government.

Sonnino, Italian Foreign Minister, informed Skirmunt, delegate of the Committee at Rome, that the Italian Government recognized the Polish troops fighting on the side of the Allies as autonomous, allied and belligerent. Lansing, American Secretary of State, wrote to the same effect to Dmowski, then in Washington:

The Government of the United States, having great sympathy for the Polish people, and seeing with joy the development of the Polish Question, experiences a sincere satisfaction in agreeing to your request to recognize the Polish Army, under the supreme political authority of the Polish National Committee, as autonomous and co-belligerent.

This threefold recognition enabled Poland to take part in the Paris Peace Conference as an allied and belligerent Power. Tremendous propaganda work for Poland had been done in 1917-18 in England and America. In October, 1917, Great Britain had recognized as an official Polish organization the branch in London of the National Committee, with Sobanski as its head. To some extent its activities clashed with those of Zaleski's organization, but the competition between them resulted in the British public obtaining more and more information about Poland. Both groups had the support of distinguished English people. Sobanski's had the advantage of official recognition and the sympathetic ear of Balfour. Among advocates of the Polish cause in London were Asquith, Wickham Steed, Belloc, Gooch, Chesterton and other men of note in various fields. The chief preoccupation of Sobanski was to show that a strong Poland, with free access to the sea, was an interest of England, and to suggest that after the War and its economic dislocations Poland would provide a market for British enterprise which in a measure would make up for the loss occasioned by the Bolshevik Revolution and its consequences. Besides his political propaganda, Sobanski concerned himself with Polish prisoners of war, German or Austrian

subjects, in the British internment camps, as well as with the status of Poles resident in England; in this way his office became a kind of Consulate.

REGENCY COUNCIL PROCLAIMS POLISH INDEPENDENCE

The end of the World War was swiftly approaching. During August and September, 1918, the Government of the Kingdom of Poland was thrown into a severe crisis by attempts made to commit the Kingdom to the German solution of the Polish Question. These efforts, caused by German pressure, which, in its turn, was caused by the growing pressure of the Allies on the Germans on the Western Front, led to visits about the middle of August to Spa and Vienna of Prince J. Radziwill, head of the State Department, who was accompanied by A. Ronikier. The results were practically nil, as the Central Powers were not in agreement. These actions of the Government gave rise to much excitement among the Warsaw politicians, especially of the Left, and on August 31 the Steczkowski Ministry resigned. Owing to the postponement of the re-opening of the Council of State the crisis continued unabated, but on September 22 Kucharzewski came again into office. Six days later the Polish deputies in the Reichsrat broke away definitively from Austria; the Emperor Charles's attempt to federalize his "faithful Austrian peoples" fell flat; towards the end of October these deputies formed a "Committee of liquidation of Polish affairs" in the Dual Monarchy. Bulgaria had capitulated on September 29—which among other consequences made Prince Max of Baden German Chancellor. On October 5 he began negotiations for peace on the basis of the Fourteen Points, a proceeding which when it was announced in the Reichstag gave S. Seyda, a Polish member, the opportunity of stressing, amidst German clamour, the Thirteenth Point referring specifically to Poland.

In the Kingdom the impression caused by Max's move was reflected in a proclamation issued by the Regency Council and the Kucharzewski Government on October 7, 1918,

dissolving the Council of State and calling for the appointment of a Government of "concentration" formed from all Polish parties with an election to follow of a representative Sejm based on democratic principles. Great difficulty was experienced, however, in constituting a new Government. The Regents appealed to several men, but in vain. On October 22 Swiezynski formed a Cabinet representing the three sections of Poland; the Ministry of War was reserved for Pilsudski, still in prison at Magdeburg. After a few hectic days in which this Ministry proclaimed Poland a Republic on November 3, it was dismissed by the Regents, and replaced by a provisional administration of functionaries, headed by Wroblewski, Under-Secretary of State, afterwards Polish Minister in London and later president of the Bank of Poland. The World War entered its final stage. Turkey was granted an armistice as October closed, and Austria-Hungary went out of the War on November 3, forthwith to topple over and fall—never probably to rise again. On November 7 Daszynski proclaimed at Lublin a provisional government of the "Republic of the People"—of workers. Four days later Germany was given an armistice, and the War was over. Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany had crashed; the fall of the three Empires opened the way at last for the Liberation of Poland.

In Warsaw there was at first great confusion. On November 10 the Regents tried to form a Government, but it never governed. Next day at seven in the morning Pilsudski, released from Magdeburg by the German Revolution, arrived at the Central Station of the capital, where he was met by Prince Z. Lubomirski, the most important of the Regents, who explained the situation to him. Warsaw crowds received Pilsudski with enthusiasm. Later on the same day the Regency Council, under Lubomirski's guidance, placed in his hands the supreme command of the Polish armies. This was not enough. On November 14 the Regency Council resigned—in a public announcement transferring its full powers to Pilsudski, till the formation of a National Government. The Man and the Hour had come.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW POLISH REPUBLIC

1918-1919

1

THE work Pilsudski had to do, the problems he had to solve, in the making of the new Polish Republic, might well have daunted and defeated a spirit and a heart less strong and courageous than his own. His dream of a genuinely independent Poland was coming true, but was far from being fully realized. Virtually a new State had to be created out of chaos. If, on the one hand, he had in his building of its fabric, the foundations laid by the Regency Council in the shape of certain Departments, a civil service, and a small armed force in Warsaw, he had, on the other, an empty Treasury, a disorganized country with its industries and agriculture in ruins, the enemy still within its borders, and above all, looming dark and heavy in the East, the menace of Bolshevism. Besides, he had to take into account the National Committee in Paris and the fact that the Poles were otherwise sharply divided politically into numerous groups, with himself, as soon was evident, the focus of their strife.

PILSUDSKI'S PROBLEMS

Before the first partition in 1772 the old Polish Republic had an area of 740,000 square kilometres, with well-defined, recognized frontiers. The new Polish Republic which emerged from the World War dated officially from November 11, 1918, when the Armistice to Germany prescribed, among other things, the conditional evacuation of occupied territory, but it could scarcely be said to have definite frontiers. The State consisted, first, of the two Governor-Generalships of Warsaw and Lublin that had formed the Austro-German Kingdom

of Poland; secondly, of Galicia; and thirdly, of Teschen. But German armies were still strong in the Governor-Generalship of Warsaw, and their disarmament and evacuation constituted a problem that had to be faced. In the Lublin Governor-Generalship the Austrians had been disarmed and its government transferred to the Poles without resistance, but in Lublin itself Daszynski had set up his Socialist Republic of the People, in itself a challenge to the Conservative Poles, not only in that region, but everywhere.

Galicia had been taken over from Austria, effectively in its Western half, with Cracow as its centre, but very doubtfully in its Eastern half, with Lwow as its chief town, as its possession was contested by the local Ukrainians—or Ruthenians, as the Poles designated them. On November 11 the larger part of Eastern Galicia was in the hands of the Ukrainians, thanks to Austrian and German connivance; during the night of October 31–November 1, 1918, they seized Lwow. A Ukrainian National Council proclaimed “The People’s Republic of the Western Ukraine,” and its territory extended westward in Galicia to the San. Lwow, however, was a thoroughly Polish city, and its relief was another problem that had to be dealt with quickly. Teschen was also in dispute, but a provisional arrangement had been made by the Poles and the Czechoslovaks, and at least temporarily there was peace in that ancient duchy.

As for the wider solution of the Polish Question, German Poland was still legally German. Nothing was settled respecting the *Kresy* or Eastern borderlands, where there were large German armies. Lithuania, joined for centuries in friendly union with Poland, had proclaimed her independence under German auspices more than a year before, and would have nothing to do with the Poles, though ten per cent. of her population was Polish.

CREATES POLISH ARMY

Pilsudski had been invested by the Regency Council with “the supreme command of the Polish armies.” The expression

Polish armies was, in Poland, not much more than a figure of speech, and he conceived that his first and most pressing duty was the creation of a Polish Army. By wireless on November 17, 1918, he requested Foch to send to Poland the "Polish Army forming in France," but received no reply. The National Committee had earlier asked for the dispatch at once of this army to Poland, but had changed its mind. Pilsudski took and made the best of what lay to his hand: the remnants of the Legions; the *Polnische Wehrmacht*; Polish officers and men who had served in the Austrian, Russian or German armies; and, above all, his Polish Military Organization, which, after his incarceration at Magdeburg, had been commanded by Rydz-Smigly, who had used it to raid Austro-German communications in 1918, and afterwards to disarm the Austrians; it now provided Pilsudski with upwards of 10,000 men.

The first three weeks of his residence in Warsaw were devoted to the organization of these elements and volunteers into a regular army. To disarm and evacuate the Germans without clashes was essential. Revolution in Germany had found an echo among these troops, who numbered 80,000 men, 30,000 being stationed in Warsaw. Beseler, the German Governor-General, disappeared and his staff dissolved. The Soldiers' Councils the men set up disregarded their officers, and sought to fraternize with the Poles, who had begun to disarm them the day before the arrival of Pilsudski in the capital. They did not resist, but Pilsudski, in view of his relatively inferior strength and the possibility of trouble, commenced negotiations with these Councils which led to an agreement on November 16 for the peaceful evacuation of the German troops on condition that they laid down their arms before crossing the frontier. By November 19 they were all evacuated, but not a single German soldier quitted Poland without surrendering his arms, except the officers, who were permitted to retain their swords.

POLAND PARTLY LIBERATED

A very considerable part of the new State was thus actually liberated. But there were other and stronger German armies which would be on the march home from White Russia on the north, and the Ukraine in Russia on the south, and might cause great disturbances in Poland and even threaten her very existence, not only by fighting but also by preparing the way for Bolshevism. It was most important that none of these armies should pass through Polish territory, and Pilsudski took the matter up with the German Soldiers' Councils in Warsaw. The German Command at Brest-Litovsk had sent an offer of assistance against the Poles to these Councils, which, however, declined it and signed the agreement with Pilsudski, who carried out further negotiations with the desired result.

But first there was a curious episode. Kessler, one of the German officers who had set Pilsudski free at Magdeburg, unexpectedly arrived at Warsaw and announced that he had come as German Minister to Poland. This claim, which might embroil Poland with the Allies, was inadmissible, and Kessler was not received by Pilsudski; as his appearance in the capital was intensely resented by its population, his visit was short, but during it he did give some help in these negotiations. Fighting took place between the Poles and the Germans in the *Kresy*, but it did not spread, and the bulk of the German troops eventually took directions back to Germany that did not trespass on the new State. Poland broke off relations with Germany on December 15, thus showing her solidarity with the Allies; she broke with Soviet Russia two days earlier.

LWOW TAKEN

Pilsudski took prompt steps for the relief of Lwow. When the Ukrainians seized the city they failed to dislodge a small Polish force from one part of it, and presently these Poles were joined by a number of their compatriots, including women, from other quarters of the town. A fierce struggle

lasted for several days, at the end of which the Poles had regained about half of the place; the stubborn contest went on in the streets for nearly three weeks, the Poles succeeding in recovering more ground, but as they were entirely isolated their plight was desperate. The first move for their relief was taken from Cracow; Przemysl, which the Ukrainians had occupied with Austrian support, was retaken; and a base was thus provided for further operations. On November 13 an order was received from Pilsudski by Roja at Cracow to attack the Ukrainians at Lwow; at the same time detachments were sent from Warsaw and Lublin.

The combined expedition left Przemysl on November 19, surprised and disconcerted the Ukrainians by a rapid and daring march along the railway, and got into touch with the Poles defending the city on the following day. On November 21 the force, about 1,400 strong, attacked the part held by the Ukrainians, and after many hours of hard fighting drove them out of it. Next day Lwow in its entirety was held by the Poles, but they were not strong enough to embark on an offensive, and the Ukrainians proceeded to invest the town. The struggle for Lwow continued till well into 1919, but the Poles repulsed all attacks on it. While this was going on Pilsudski had also to deal in Volhynia with that other Ukrainian Republic which had figured so prominently in the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in 1918; its leading soldier was the Ataman Petlura. Early in January, 1919, it signed a sort of treaty of union with the Western Ukraine Republic, and the two together made practically a single front against the Poles.

Another front, of a more formidable character, engaged Pilsudski's attention at the same time. The German armies had begun to withdraw from the north, but the areas from which they retired were forthwith occupied by troops of the Soviet. This Bolshevik movement started on November 17, 1918, and progressed, as it met with no opposition, until it covered by the end of the year a large part of White Russia and Lithuania and small portions of Latvia and Estonia. Poland was threatened directly by the march of the Reds

westward, the question of her frontiers being primarily involved. On November 17, 1918, Sapieha and many other Poles of the *Kresy*, parts of which the Soviet was occupying, had organized at Warsaw a committee for its defence, and it was authorized to recruit a White Russian-Lithuanian division to oppose the advancing Bolsheviks, who on January 5, 1919, took Vilna and, a fortnight later, held Pinsk and Lida. They were driven out of these places, except Vilna, early in February by the Poles.

GROWTH OF POLISH ARMY

During the first three months of Pilsudski's rule his hands were very full from the military point of view; it was most evident that his supreme task was the formation of a strong army. The army grew rapidly; on November 11, 1918, it consisted of no more than twenty-four battalions of infantry, three squadrons of cavalry, and five batteries of artillery. Conscription was not introduced, but volunteers were called for, and the reply was spirited. By the middle of January, 1919, the number of battalions exceeded 100; there were more than 70 squadrons of cavalry and 80 batteries, with technical units and a small air force, the whole strength amounting to about 110,000 men; but they lacked homogeneity, armament and equipment to a considerable extent, and the necessity for sending them quickly to the front did not improve matters. On the other hand, neither the Ukrainians nor the Bolsheviks were in much better case; the former were attacked by the Bolsheviks and the latter were handicapped by having to fight the counter-revolutionary armies under Denikin, Yudenitch, and Kolchak, and until they subdued them were unable to concentrate their efforts against the Poles; thus time in a measure worked for Pilsudski.

PILSUDSKI AS CHIEF OF THE STATE

But Pilsudski was not only Commander-in-Chief; he was also Chief of the State, and practically Dictator, a fact which furthered his military plans and operations, just as it told

immensely in his ordering of the civil side of his work. The Regency Council had at first wished to keep the civil power in its own hands, but public opinion, of which a striking indication was a hostile demonstration in front of the palace of the Regent Archbishop Kakowski, was too much against it, and in abdicating it handed over everything to Pilsudski. Later in his life he said it would have been better if he had assumed an absolute dictatorship, but at the outset he was dominated by the idea of legality, and he did not wish to recognize himself as the "source of legal power in Poland"—his phrasing of the supreme authority governing the country. He did not regard either the Regency Council, the creation of the Central Powers, or the National Committee in Paris, which represented only a part of the nation, and still less Daszynski's Lublin Government, as the source of legal power in Poland. He wanted for that a genuinely Polish Government constituted, and he designed to work with and through it. Politically the new State was in a ferment; the wine of freedom was heady. Pilsudski's view was that "Revolution from the Left was always more dangerous than from the Right, and therefore it was necessary to take the Left into account first, and get it to participate in the Government of the country." He sought to make the largest masses of the population understand that they must collaborate in governing, and to accustom them to positive constructive effort instead of negative and destructive activities, of which there had been signs in "agrarian movements" and disturbances in some parts of the land.

THE FIRST CABINET

Daszynski gave no trouble; on the contrary, after negotiations he quashed his republic, came to Warsaw and co-operated with Pilsudski in an attempt to form a Cabinet of the Left, but it failed owing to the opposition of the Right, with the support of the People's or Populist Party (*Ludowcy*), headed by Witos, a well-off Galician peasant, who had been a member of the Reichsrat in Vienna. Pilsudski next entrusted the

formation of a Cabinet to Moraczewski, a Galician Socialist of a more moderate type than Daszynski and a personal friend; Moraczewski was successful and his Government took office on November 18, 1918, with himself as Prime Minister, Wasilewski as Foreign Minister and Thugutt as Minister of the Interior. Four days later a decree appeared, signed by Pilsudski, in which he stated that he assumed supreme power as provisional Chief of the State, and would exercise it until the institution of the first Sejm, when he would transfer it to that body. He wished the Sejm to assemble in the shortest possible time, and he bade Moraczewski prepare a measure "on the basis even of the most radical Bill respecting the mode of carrying out the elections for it." He was ready to accept "any Constitution available" in order to realize at the earliest moment his idea of there being a real source of legal power. In this he went too far, as the future taught him; but time pressed, and he felt it essential to interest the Left in working for the State. Therefore he decided not to reject at that instant the most radical ideas, but to make use of them to keep the energies of the people, already severely tried by manifold hardships and suffering, from being exploited by Bolshevism, with its alluring but deceitful propaganda. And in this he succeeded—a great achievement in those perilous days of political flux and confusion.

A MOST DEMOCRATIC FRANCHISE

The price was paid in the increasing antagonism of the Right to himself and the Moraczewski Government. On November 28 two fresh decrees were published; the first sanctioned an extremely democratic electoral law which had been elaborated by Moraczewski, and the second set the general election for January 26, 1919. The franchise was to be equal and direct; to include both sexes, the voting age being fixed at 21; to be secret, and based on the system of proportional representation. Nothing like this existed in Old Poland; anything like it existed in few countries of the world in 1918-19. With it the

struggle for political power in Poland became intensified among the various parties and groups. The Right, mostly composed of National Democrats—the Ententophils—had their eyes turned to Paris, Dmowski and the National Committee, the representative Polish organization recognized by the Allied and Associated Powers. As yet the new Polish Republic of Pilsudski enjoyed no such recognition; to procure it was the next big step in the programme.

Two days after his installation at Warsaw as provisional Chief of the State, Pilsudski informed by wireless both belligerents and neutrals of the “existence of a Polish independent State, uniting all Polish territories.” In his message to the Allies he added that this “independence was due to the brilliant victories of the Allied armies,” and that he hoped that the “powerful Western democracies would give their aid and fraternal support to the restored Polish Republic.” As noted above, he asked Foch by wireless to send to Poland as soon as possible the “Polish troops which formed part of the French Army.” A somewhat similar radio was dispatched to Wilson at Washington, but its appeal was directed to “all soldiers of Polish nationality who had fought under foreign flags.” These messages showed that Pilsudski was not fully informed of the legal status of the Polish Army in France. Some correspondence had already been passing between the National Committee at Paris and the Allied Governments respecting sending this army to Poland, but nothing had been settled.

WARSAW-PARIS NEGOTIATIONS

Dmowski arrived in Paris from America on November 19, and the French Foreign Office, after consulting him, decided to take no notice of Pilsudski's telegrams. The Polish National Committee, in view of the Allied recognition of the Czechoslovak National Council at Paris as a *de facto* Government, had an idea of proclaiming itself the *de facto* Government of Poland; France approved, but England demurred, and the project was abandoned—a fortunate thing, otherwise there

might have been civil war in Poland. Wiser councils prevailed, and the Committee resolved to get into contact with Pilsudski by sending Stanislas Grabski to Warsaw, with instructions to begin pourparlers with him and the various political parties for the formation of a coalition Government. Grabski was in Warsaw for several weeks; he was successful in bringing about an accord in principle between the Committee and Pilsudski respecting a common front at the Peace Conference, but he failed as regards the formation of a coalition Government, a proposal which was opposed by the Left and by Pilsudski himself.

Pilsudski next sent a delegation, composed of Dluski, M. Sokolnicki, Sujkowski and others, to Paris to discuss with the Committee the taking of joint action. With Dluski went a private letter from Pilsudski to Dmowski, in which he said he desired to avoid a double representation of Poland before the Allies, as a single front could alone guarantee the effective hearing of their claims. "I trust," he said, "that in this case and at such a serious time a few men at least—if, alas! not all Poland—will rise above party politics, cliques, and groups; and I should like to think of you as being among those men." Dluski also carried to Dmowski a letter from Grabski stating that Pilsudski agreed to accept the Committee as representing Poland before the Entente and in the peace negotiations, on condition, however, that the Committee should have representatives of himself and the Warsaw Government added to it.

On January 7, 1919, Dmowski, Zamoyski, Seyda and Wiewlowieyski, of the Committee, met Dluski, Sokolnicki and Sujkowski in conference. Dmowski made a long statement in which he said that if Poland was recognized by the Entente as an independent and Allied State, it was thanks to the Committee; it alone was qualified to represent Poland at the Peace Conference; it alone could designate Polish diplomatic representatives in the Allied countries. Dluski replied that he was aware of the services rendered to the cause of Poland by the Committee, and that he recognized the political talent of its chief; but he protested against assigning to the Committee

exclusively the merit of having worked for the restoration of the State, and he suggested that as Poland was to have two delegates at the Peace Conference one should be nominated by the Committee and the other by Pilsudski. Further, he announced that he was charged by Pilsudski to present to the heads of the Allied and Associated Powers notification of the independence of Poland. Dmowski in his turn protested against this, and the matter dropped—for a time; this meeting and subsequent meetings of the Committee and the Dluski mission were in fact without a favourable result. Throughout them Dmowski was uncompromising in upholding the Committee as the accepted of the Allies, and in his opposition to Pilsudski, who, he declared, had no standing with them, which was true.

PADEREWSKI GOES TO POLAND

The Allies knew little of Pilsudski, and did not like very much what they knew; they remembered how his Legions had fought for Austria, and how he had collaborated with the Germans in the Council of State; they did not give proper value to his reason for resigning from that body and his consequent imprisonment at Magdeburg; they had no clear idea of the work he was doing in Poland in organizing the country and in stemming the Bolshevist tide, but they had heard accounts, later proved exaggerated, of pogroms of Jews, and they rather looked on him as dangerously advanced politically from his Socialist associations. For several months the French Foreign Office supported Dmowski as against Pilsudski. For a while it had seemed as if there were two Polish Governments, one in Warsaw and the other in Paris. The basic feature of the situation was, however, that Pilsudski was installed in Warsaw as Chief of a Polish State in being, with an ever-growing army that was wholly, passionately devoted to him. A compromise was indicated, the deadlock had to be broken. Poland was fortunate in having in this emergency another son as a great leader—Paderewski.

In his own province of the great world of art no one was

better known or more highly esteemed than Paderewski. Was he something more than a great artist? That was the question. In the United States he had done splendid work for the Polish cause, winning among other things the confidence of President Wilson and Colonel House. Though not formally a National Democrat, he was in sympathy generally with Dmowski, but he put Poland first, and he felt that Poland called him. Dmowski he knew, but not Pilsudski; he determined to go to Warsaw to see that formidable man, who, he was sure, was not less patriotic than himself, and would listen to reason. He arrived in Paris from America on December 15, 1918, conferred with Dmowski and other members of the National Committee, as well as with representatives of the Allied and Associated Powers, and took passage in the British cruiser *Condor* for Danzig, where he landed on December 25. But he did not go straight to Warsaw; he went first to Poznan (Posen), the capital of part of German Poland (Poznania), and there he was welcomed with great ovations by all classes and parties among its Poles. And there, too, he saw with his own eyes the beginning of what was being effected for the liberation of German Poland from the German yoke, for his very presence provoked the outbreak.

REVOLUTION IN POZNANIA

The Revolution in Germany had its repercussion in German Poland in the setting up in Poznan and elsewhere in that territory of Councils of Workers and Soldiers. The Poles also established Councils, but this did not prevent them from joining the other Councils, of which they got control in some localities. On November 14, 1918, the Polish members of the Reichstag and of the Prussian Diet met in Poznan and decided to form a Supreme Popular Council, for which they later held an election of delegates by universal suffrage. This Council met on December 3, and appointed an executive committee of six men, amongst whom were Korfanty, a deputy from Silesia and soon to come into prominence in connexion with the

struggle for Upper Silesia; L. Seyda; and Mgr. Adamski, afterwards Bishop of Silesia, head of the Co-operative Credit Societies which had so much helped the Poles in their fight with the Germans for possession of the land. This Council ignored Pilsudski and the Warsaw Government and gave its adhesion to the National Committee in Paris, constituting it the representative of German Poland. The National Democrats, of whom Seyda was the local leader, were strong in this area; to their party belonged the gentry, the intellectuals and the middle classes. One of their principal representatives in the Reichstag was Trampczynski, a member both of the Reichstag and of the Prussian Diet. They grew stronger and stronger during the War, and while their attitude to Germany became more and more openly hostile, they showed for a while a pro-Russian tendency. Neither the Socialists nor the Populists had an important place among the Polish parties in this section. A political storm had been gathering for weeks in this area, and Paderewski's visit to Poznan on December 27, 1919, caused it to break. The Poles welcomed him enthusiastically; the Germans retaliated with some shots of which a Pole called Ratajczak was the victim, and then the Poles at once rose in open revolt and turned the Germans out of the city. The insurrection speedily extended over the whole district; the Germans resisted, and severe fighting took place, which was not terminated till February 16, 1919, when an armistice was concluded at Trèves by Foch in the name of the Allies and Poland. Legally, however, German Poland belonged to Germany till the Treaty of Versailles handed it over definitely to Poland, and some time elapsed before Poznan was fully integrated in the Polish State.

PADEREWSKI AND PILSUDSKI

From Poznan Paderewski went on to Warsaw on January 3, 1919, and was received by its population with the utmost enthusiasm. He had his first meeting with Pilsudski on the following day, but it led to nothing, and from Warsaw Paderewski proceeded to Cracow, where demonstrations similar

to those in the two other cities were made in his honour. His enormous popularity among his countrymen could not be doubted, but his mission of conciliation had so far failed. That its success was necessary was perhaps indicated by an event which occurred during the night of January 4-5: an attempt, to which Paderewski was privy, at a *coup d'état* directed against Pilsudski and the Moraczewski Government, and led by Sapieha. The conspirators arrested the Prime Minister and some of the other Ministers, but did not succeed in taking Pilsudski, and the plot collapsed. Next day Pilsudski promptly released the Ministers and imprisoned the ring-leaders. Ignoring what had happened, he invited Paderewski to return to Warsaw, and the negotiations were resumed.

On January 14, 1919, Paderewski sent a wireless to Dmowski informing him that he had come to a complete agreement with Pilsudski. As it was impossible to form a Government composed of representatives of all parties, because of their excessive demands, Pilsudski had proposed to him that he should form a Government of independent personages representative of the three sections of Poland, and capable at the same time of assuming the direction of the great Departments of State. Paderewski said he had agreed to this, asked Dmowski's opinion of his action, and wound up by insisting on the addition to the National Committee of ten outstanding members of the Left. Dmowski replied next day, endorsing what Paderewski had done, and accepting the enlargement of the Committee.

THE PADEREWSKI CABINET

For the moment at least, Pilsudski, Dmowski and Paderewski were in unison. Pilsudski promptly got to work by demanding the resignation of the Moraczewski Cabinet, which did not at all wish to resign, but complied on January 16. Next day Paderewski formed a Government of consolidation and social construction in a *union sacrée*, with himself as Premier and Foreign Minister, the other Ministers being Wojciechowski (Interior), Englich (Finance), Hacia (Commerce), Janiszewski

(Health), Eberhardt (Communications), Linde (Posts), Minkiewicz (Food), Janicki (Agriculture), Iwanowski (Labour), Przesmycki (Fine Arts), Supinski (Justice), Pruchnik (Public Works) and Wroczynski (War). The post of Minister of Education was not filled at the moment. A genuinely National Government was thus formed; it was recognized as such by the National Committee on January 21; and two days afterwards Paderewski returned the compliment by recognizing the Committee as representing Poland's interests with the Allied and Associated Governments.

Dmowski and Paderewski, with Dluski as alternate, were the Polish delegates at the Peace Conference, which opened at Paris on January 19, 1919. The presence of the Polish delegates at the Conference was equivalent to official recognition both of the Republic and of her Government, with Pilsudski as Chief of the State. Recognition *de jure* was accorded to Poland by America on January 30, by France on February 23, by England on February 25, and by Italy on February 27.

FIRST GENERAL ELECTION

Meanwhile the general election for the first or Constituent Sejm had been held, but the Poland to which it applied covered only the former Austro-German Governor-Generalships and Western Galicia. An election was impossible in Eastern Galicia because of the conflict going on with the Ukrainians, and the former deputies in the Reichsrat from this area were appointed members of this Sejm. Not till after the Treaty of Versailles did the Popular Council of Poznan send deputies to Warsaw. Poland had still to be unified, but the general election was none the less a most important event in a State organized from the first in accordance with thoroughly democratic ideas. The election passed off tranquilly, and about a fortnight later the Sejm sat in Warsaw.

FIRST OR CONSTITUENT SEYM

On February 10, 1919, the opening took place, after a solemn service in St. John's Cathedral, attended by Pilsudski, who

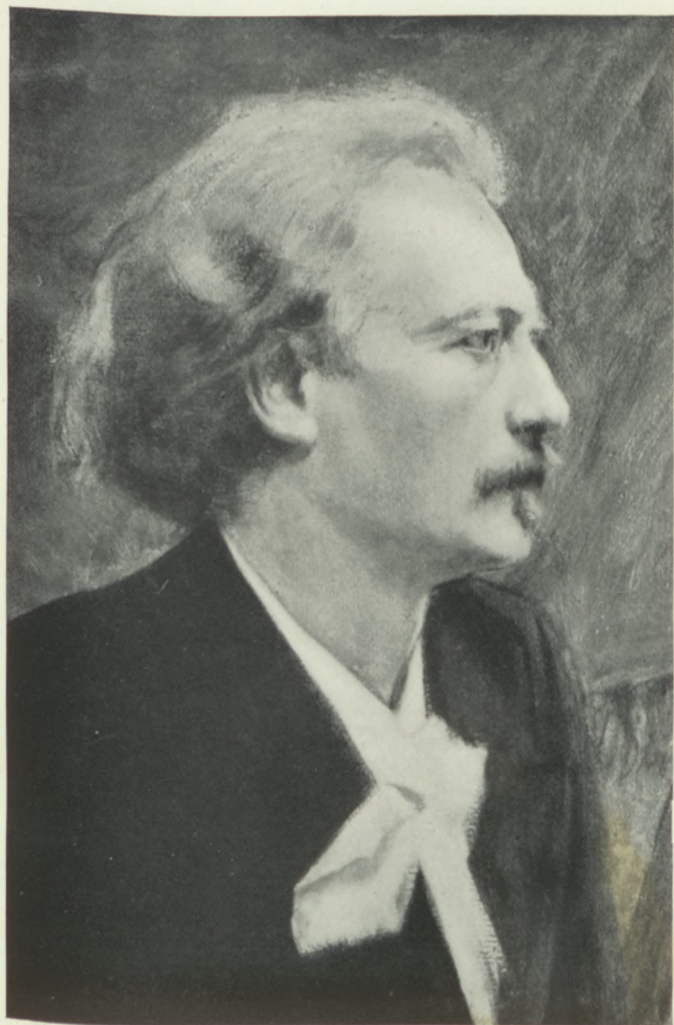
wore his old uniform of the First Brigade of the Legions, Paderewski, the Archbishops and Bishops of Poland, the Cabinet, and the high officers of the army, as well as all the elected deputies. Pilsudski entered the House accompanied by Paderewski, and addressing the deputies, said:

A century and a half of struggles often entailing blood and sacrifice has found its triumph this day. A century and a half of dreams of a Free Poland has waited for their realization to this moment. To-day is a great holiday for our nation—a day of joy after the long dreadful night of suffering. At this moment when all Polish hearts are beating fast I am happy that to me has been given the honour of opening the Polish Sejm, which will be the sole master and ruler of the home of our country.

But the great joy of this day would be much greater if it were not troubled by the fact that we are met at a very grave moment. After a long and terrible war the whole world, including Poland, waits and longs for peace. This longing, however, cannot become to-day a reality for Poland. Her sons must go to defend her borders. They must assure to her a free development.

Work to do! The veritable Pilsudski note! It was not a time for rejoicing and thanksgiving alone; the State had to be served, its frontiers protected, its internal development secured. A week before the Polish forces had begun a counter-offensive against the Bolsheviks; on February 9 the Poles occupied Brest-Litovsk. But more soldiers were needed for victory, for the making of a Poland truly free.

After Pilsudski had declared the Sejm open, its oldest member, Prince Ferdinand Radziwill, a former member of the German Reichstag and of the Prussian Diet, as well as president of the Polish Kolo or club, made a speech in which he spoke of the honour done to him and his colleagues from Wielkopolska, the historic name of Poznan, by inviting them to take part in the first Sejm without being elected. Assuming the leadership at the first sitting of the Sejm, he appointed the two youngest members, the Socialist Niedzialkowski and the National Democrat Kaczynski, to act as secretaries. On February 14, 1919, a second session was held, and Trampczynski was elected Marshal or Speaker by 155 votes against 149 for Witos, the former member of the Austrian



M. IGNACE PADEREWSKI

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Reichsrat and of the Galician Diet, and the leader of the Piast Peasant Party. This was a victory for the Right. The Sejm at the moment had 305 members, and appeared to be about equally divided, but party lines could not be called rigid.

Later this Sejm consisted of 395 members: 241 deputies from the Congress Kingdom, all elected; 105 from Galicia, of whom 77 were elected and 28 appointed, and 49 from Poznania, of whom 42 were elected and 7 appointed. According to a decree of the Chief of the State on February 7, 1919, all Polish deputies in the German Reichstag were considered deputies in the Sejm, and the same principle was adopted respecting Polish members of the Austrian Reichsrat. Six months later an election was held in Poznania; an election was held in Pomerania in 1920. Korfanty and Sosinski were appointed to represent Upper Silesia. In 1922 Vilna was represented by twenty delegates from the Vilna district.

POLISH PARTYISM

The Sejm went to work in its own way. It was composed of many parties and groups, and swung to this side or that under the influence of political winds and currents not often gentle; the internal conditions of the country, as well as the external, were difficult; political experience was lacking. If the political labels familiar during the War—Passivist, Activist, Independentist, Austrophil, Russophil—had lost their meaning, they unfortunately survived in personal boasts and vauntings, in claims and counter-claims, in taunts and recriminations which exacerbated party strife. The party divisions were not novel, and similar groupings, roughly speaking, were to be found in other countries and parliaments: the Right (Conservative), the Centre (Moderate) and the Left (Radical) were terms used and understood throughout Europe in much the same sense. In the Polish Sejm the Right consisted of the National Democrats, the National Christian Party and the Christian Socialists; the Centre was made up of the Peasant Party calling itself Piast, from the name of a founder of Poland

whom legend said was a peasant, and three other parties; the Left included the Socialists, the National Workers' Party, and the Populists. There were besides various "Independents," two Communists, and the National Minorities—a few Jews and a couple of Germans. The largest party was that of the National Democrats, and they sought to dominate the Sejm. Numbers of deputies were simple peasants, but they were divided in their politics, some belonging to the Piast Party, which was led by Witos, and others to the Populist *Wyzwolenie* (Deliverance) Party, whose leader was Thugutt.

Not all the parties had elaborated programmes, and during this Sejm changes in the orientation of several of them were frequent and bewildering. The fundamentals of the situation were the opposed policies of the Right and the Left, as in other lands. In Poland the Right had been hostile to the Moraczewski Government and particularly to its legislation in the interests of labour. The Right, with its numerous landowners, identified Pilsudski with the Left, and in any case was bent on circumscribing his power as much as possible. On February 20, 1919, Pilsudski's position as Chief of the State was confirmed unanimously by the Sejm (305 votes), but this decision was accompanied by other decisions, the whole forming what was afterwards known as the Little Constitution, which in effect took back what it had given him, for the Sejm constituted itself the sovereign power, and relegated the Chief of the State to playing the thoroughly secondary part of doing what it told him. The Little Constitution remained in force till it was replaced by the Constitution passed in March, 1921, which in no wise improved the position of the Chief of the State, as it reasserted the absolute supremacy of the Sejm. On February 20, 1919, the Sejm also passed a vote of confidence in the Paderewski Government.

LAMENTABLE ECONOMIC STATE OF POLAND

While the Government and general political position in Poland was being clarified during the winter of 1918-19, the economic

situation of the country, Poznania excepted, was lamentable. There was a grave shortage of food; in some localities where seed had been sown the results were poor; in others no crops had been put in at all; many thousands of people were half-starved, and there was much sickness. The military movements in the *Kresy* added to the economic difficulties, as they took place over territory which had been swept bare by the Bolsheviks. Live-stock had been depleted by German and Austrian requisitions, and what was left was ill-nourished. In the industrial centres means were lacking to start what factories were still standing; in Lodz a quarter of a million working people were out of employment; there were no raw materials and no markets. The Government had no money and no credit. When the Moraczewski Government tried to raise loans, it had failed because of its Socialist complexion. The Paderewski Government was in better favour, more especially with America. Even before Paderewski became Prime Minister, and indeed while he was beginning negotiations for a National Government with Pilsudski, the Americans, through the admirable Hoover organizations, had come to the assistance of Poland.

AMERICAN HELP

On January 4, 1919, Americans representing Hoover arrived in Warsaw, and discussed the food situation with Pilsudski, Moraczewski and others. In two days preliminary estimates were completed of Poland's requirements, and arrangements were made for the transport and distribution of supplies from ships on the way from America. The Americans made a tour of the country, and saw for themselves to what straits it was reduced and that relief to be effective must be speedy. The first vessels with cargoes of flour reached Danzig on February 17; German opposition to the use of the port for the Poles had been so strong that the Allies had to intervene to overcome it. During February, 1919, 14,000 tons of foodstuffs arrived in Poland; further progress was made, and in April 52,000 tons of food passed through Danzig into Poland; nor did the work stop

there, but went on and on for many months. America also showed her goodwill by giving credits for the supplies she sent, Congress having passed the Appropriation Act which made a sum of \$100,000,000 immediately available for credits in just such cases as that of Poland, with her lack of money. These credits to Poland were equivalent to loans, which afterwards were included in the funding of the Polish Debt.

The effect of these food supplies was political as well as economic; the Paderewski Government was strengthened; famine and want, a favourable seed-bed for Bolshevism, were done away with, hope took the place of despair, and confidence revived, though naturally all this did not take place in a day. In March, 1919, Paderewski, in a grateful message to Hoover, put one aspect of the food situation simply but forcibly: "The activity of Colonel Grove and his staff is beyond praise, goods of higher quality arriving daily, and thousands of people, after four and a half years of terrible suffering, realizing at last what wholesome nutritious bread is." The food supplies facilitated reconstruction and consolidation generally in Poland.

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The fight for the frontiers continued. Indeed, scarcely had the National Government under Paderewski been constituted when hostilities broke out between the Poles and the Czechoslovaks in Teschen.

STRUGGLE FOR TESCHEN

On January 23, 1919, after a short ultimatum, Czechoslovak forces attacked Bohumin, Frystad and Karwina on the north-west, and compelled the Poles, who were in inferior strength, to retire; at the same time Czechoslovak troops marched in on the south and occupied Jablonkow. Reinforcements were sent from Cracow, and then from Warsaw and other Polish centres, to the town of Teschen where the Poles had concentrated. But pressed by much stronger forces and with their left flank threatened, the Poles abandoned the town during

the night of January 26-27, and fell back on the Vistula. The Czechoslovaks attacked vigorously on January 29, the chief struggle taking place at the railway bridge at Drohomysl. Next day they assailed Skoczow, farther south, and a sharp contest went on for two days along the whole line, but the Poles retained their positions. On January 31 they agreed to an armistice which the Czechoslovaks proposed. The Allies in Paris intervened, and on February 3 a convention was signed between the two countries by Dmowski and Benesh. Before it went into force the Czechoslovaks attacked once more, but were repulsed, during the night of February 23-24. Another convention was signed and the Poles recovered the town of Teschen, but the controversy was not settled and embittered relations continued between Poland and Czechoslovakia for a long time. Another frontier question—concerning Spisz and Orava, on the line of the Carpathians in former Hungary—was also in debate and further embroiled these States.

POLAND AT THE PEACE CONFERENCE

While Poland was engaged in warfare for some of her frontiers, Dmowski in Paris was fighting strenuously in the diplomatic field for all of them. On January 29, 1919, Dmowski, accompanied by Piltz, appeared before the Supreme Council, in answer to its summons, and in a speech of five hours' length, first in French and then in English, demanded that Germany should assign to Poland all territories the majority of whose inhabitants were Poles, and should also surrender Danzig as Poland's sole port of access to the sea. Further, he set forth the claims of Poland concerning her eastern frontiers. It was the powerful plea of a very able advocate who believed sincerely and even passionately in the strength of his case, but the claims he made were such as to excite keen opposition in more than one quarter, as was to be expected, and as was indicated by the fighting for the frontiers that had been or was still going on with Germans, Ukrainians, Czechoslovaks and Bolsheviks.

To that had to be added the fact that the struggle, as it developed in the Peace Conference, was complicated by divergences of view between Clemenceau and Lloyd George, with President Wilson holding a half-way position, respecting the Polish claims—to say nothing of the play of personal rancours and a general background of intrigue, bargaining and tittle-tattle. The immediate result of Dmowski's speech was the decision of the Supreme Council to send to Poland, to make investigations on the spot and report, an Inter-Allied Commission; it consisted of Noulens and Niessel (France), Howard and Wiart (England), Kernan and Lord (America), and Montagna and Longhena (Italy). A Commission on Polish Affairs was constituted on February 12, 1919, its members being Jules Cambon (France), who presided, Tyrrell (England), Bowman (America), Torretta (Italy), and Otchiai (Japan). As the Polish Liaison Committee, its business was to receive the reports of the Inter-Allied Mission, examine them and submit its findings to the Supreme Council.

Wilson's Thirteenth Point predicated an independent Polish State inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, and with a free and secure access to the sea; it also brought in the principle of economic necessity in favour of Poland. This point, as well as the other thirteen, had been accepted by the Allies, the Central Powers and the Poles. But such expressions as *indisputably Polish* and *economic necessity* were hardly definite enough to leave no room for differences of opinion. There were such differences, and the Polish Delegation did its utmost to remove them; it flooded the Conference, and not only the Conference, with statements supporting the Polish case by ethnographical, historical, economic, strategical and other arguments, according to the particular matter at issue.

Its propaganda was as persistent as it was copious; so was that, however, of its opponents, who also loudly accused the Poles of "Imperialism," though they were doing nothing more than trying to get back as much as they could of what had been their own. It was always obvious that the principle of nationality needed great care in its application, and equally that all the

care in the world would not prevent instances occurring of the necessary overriding of that principle—which meant the existence of National Minorities, often considerable, in various States. The claims put forward by the Polish Delegation covered important National Minorities; Poland besides had in her large Jewish population a so-called National Minority problem such as no other State had to face.

POLAND AND THE JEWS

In 1914 there were more Jews in Poland than in all the rest of Europe, which was accounted for by two things. First, Old Poland protected the Jews when other States treated them scurvily, and this led large numbers of them to make their homes on Polish soil. They engaged in trade and commerce, which the Poles of that day thought beneath them, and they prospered and multiplied; their success drew Jews from other lands to Poland. The second thing, of much later date, was the intrusion of great masses of Jews, known as *Litvaks*, into Congress Poland, because the Russian Government had prohibited them from living in certain areas of Russia, and compelled them to settle among the Poles. When the War broke out there were about three million Jews in Russian and Austrian Poland; there were upwards of 300,000 in Warsaw alone. Some Jews had been assimilated, and were styled "Poles of the Jewish faith," but the vast majority retained their own language, dress and customs, and lived a separate life as far as possible.

During the War most of the Polish Jews were on the side of the Central Powers; indeed, many identified themselves with Germanism; others demanded national autonomy for Jewry in Poland. Before the Peace Conference met, Jews streamed to Paris from various centres in Europe and America to take whatever part in it that was open to them, and they began by making an intensive propaganda out of the stories, which had been given prominence in the Press, of pogroms perpetrated by Poles on Jews at Lwow in November, 1918.

These stories proved to be grossly exaggerated, the truth being that some sixty Jews supporting the Ukrainians were killed during the fighting for the possession of that city between the Poles and the Ukrainians. One journal put the number of Jewish victims at from 2,500 to 3,000! But until the truth was known it was widely believed that the Polish Government was organizing pogroms, and a formidable campaign was prosecuted by Jews in England, France and America against Poland on the score of this and other alleged outrages on Polish Jews. Some of the Jews in Paris for the Conference were strongly in favour of *national* rights, but others spoke merely of the emancipation of their co-religionists in the East, or *equal* rights. A Committee of the Jewish Delegations drew up a memorandum demanding the recognition of national rights for the Jews of Eastern Europe, despite objections raised by representative English and French Jews. There was also in Paris a tendency on the part of some Jews to co-operate with the Ukrainians, who had a delegation there which on February 10, 1919, addressed a memorandum to the Supreme Council demanding the recognition of the Ukrainian Republic, "constituted by the will of all its people on Ukrainian territory, formerly belonging to Russia and Austria-Hungary"—Eastern Galicia, as well as the Ukraine in Russia.

THE FRONTIERS CLAIMED

Following up his speech on January 29, 1919, Dmowski sent a Note to the Commission on Polish Affairs on February 28 dealing in detail with the frontier claimed by Poland on the west. On March 3 he addressed to this Commission another Note dealing in detail with the frontier claimed by Poland on the east. In the first he presented Poland's case with respect to Galicia, Poznania (German Poland), West Prussia (Pomerania) and Warmia (Ermeland—a western part of East Prussia). Concerning Galicia, he denied that the Ukrainian movement justified taking away its eastern half from Poland, but admitted that the Ukrainians there had rights—which

Poland would respect. He touched on the controversy with Czechoslovakia over Teschen, Spisz and Orava. Then he went on to discuss the Polish claim to the possession of Upper Silesia as regarded the district of Oppeln, certain parts excepted, and other districts in that territory. Next he passed on to Poznania, the "cradle of the Polish race, and the seat of the oldest Polish civilization," and then to West Prussia; he traced the frontier desired by Poland up through Pomerania to the Baltic, demanded the attribution of Pomerania and Warmia to Poland, and suggested that East Prussia should be separated from Germany and become an independent republic. In his second Note to the Commission, Dmowski said that Poland relinquished, though with regret, its claim to the eastern zone of the *Kresy*, namely, the Government of Kieff, the eastern parts of Podolia and Volhynia, the eastern part of the Government of Minsk, and the Governments of Mohileff and Vitebsk.

Finally, he advocated the organization of the regions speaking Lithuanian as a distinct country within the Polish State, with a special government based on the rights of Lithuanian nationality. There had been a good deal of discussion respecting Lithuania in the Polish Delegation; Pilsudski representatives wished for Polish-Lithuanian federation; Dmowski and his friends favoured a policy of incorporation or annexation; on a vote being taken, Dmowski won by ten votes to four, a rebuff for Pilsudski, who was a strong federalist, as he subsequently showed, and not alone respecting Lithuania.

On March 12, 1919, the Commission on Polish Affairs sent to the Supreme Council its report on the Polish-German frontier, after considering the information submitted to it from the Inter-Allied Commission. It recommended that the western limit of the Polish ethnographical majorities in Poznania and West Prussia should be the frontier between Poland and Germany; that Danzig and the territory traversed by the Danzig-Eylau-Warsaw railway, with the line itself, should be given to Poland; that all districts of Upper Silesia having a Polish majority should be Polish, except a small corner in the

south, which was to be given to Czechoslovakia; and that the fate of Allenstein (Olsztyn) should be decided by plebiscite. Without accepting the whole of Dmowski's programme, the Commission had conceded a very large part of it. The report was unanimous—a most significant thing. When it came before the Supreme Council, Lloyd George moved its return to the Commission for revision on the score that it violated the principle of nationality respecting Marienwerder (Kwidzyn—through which the Danzig-Eylau-Warsaw railway ran) and Danzig. The report was sent back, but attached to it were his proposals that there should be a plebiscite for Marienwerder and that Danzig should become a Free City.

POLISH ARMY IN FRANCE GOES TO POLAND

Early in April, 1919, Paderewski arrived in Paris from Warsaw, and as Prime Minister of Poland took precedence over Dmowski. On March 27 the Sejm at Warsaw had passed a unanimous resolution that Poland was the ally of the Allies, in reply to propaganda hostile to Poland which affirmed that she was anti-Ally. Earlier in the month the Sejm had voted conscription and the calling up for the army of six classes of recruits—1896-1901. By that time the Polish Army comprised about 230,000 men, but during March there was little forward movement in the field on the part of the Poles, who stood almost everywhere on the defensive. It was not till the middle of that month that the Supreme Council took decided action regarding the "Polish Army in France," and authorized Foch to demand from Germany passage for it into Poland through Danzig. The German Government refused on the ground that these troops were not, properly speaking, Allied troops. On March 26 Foch issued an ultimatum based on clause XVI of the Armistice, and this led immediately to a violent Press campaign in Germany which went so far as to declare that rather than yield on the question of Danzig, it would be preferable to break the Armistice. Foch then demanded that Germany should send a representative to Spa to come to a

definitive settlement; Erzberger was sent, and after much discussion an agreement was signed on April 4, 1919, by which, while the Allies maintained in principle their right to utilize Danzig, they met the German view by consenting to the dispatch of the Polish troops overland across Germany to Poland or by sea to Stettin and Königsberg and thence into Poland, instead of their going through Danzig. On April 16, J. Haller, who commanded this army, left Paris for Warsaw, where he arrived five days later; the force, which comprised four divisions and the elements of two more, traversed Germany by train and reached Polish territory in the latter half of April.

LLOYD GEORGE AND POLAND

Meanwhile the Commission on Polish Affairs had been considering Lloyd George's revision of their report on the Polish-German frontier, and had come to the conclusion unanimously to stand by that report, which they therefore returned unchanged to the Supreme Council on April 12, 1919. Concerning Danzig they stated that, having heard Paderewski on the subject, they confirmed the position they had taken up respecting the attribution of the city to Poland, as they believed that any other solution of the question would "compromise the establishment and maintenance of the peace of Europe." The Supreme Council again refused Danzig to Poland, Lloyd George being implacable. Poles in general looked on him as extremely antagonistic to Poland, and offered several explanations of his unfriendly attitude. Some put it down to "personal attacks" on him by Dmowski, and certainly no love was lost between the two men. In his book *Polityka polska*, Dmowski ascribed Lloyd George's hostility to Jewish influences. A third opinion was expressed by Kutrzeba, a Professor of Law at Cracow, who acted as an expert to the Polish Delegation in Paris, in his book, *Polska odrodzona* (Poland Resuscitated); he said that England did indeed desire the re-establishment of a Polish State, but desired it to be small and weak, because a strong Polish State would increase the power of France

too much, a thing which Britain diplomacy sought to prevent.

However these things were, Lloyd George ostensibly based himself on the nationality principle, and he prevailed. He was supported as a rule by the British Press, which took the line that if Poland included large National Minorities she would be weakened thereby, be an easy prey, and therefore a menace to peace. But if the Poles lacked British support for their claims, they found a great advocate in Clemenceau, backed by preponderant French opinion. Clemenceau wanted a "strong, a very strong" Poland, as one of the surest guarantees of peace in face of German ideas of revenge and as a barrier between Germany and Bolshevik Russia. No doubt the traditional friendship of France for Poland had its weight, but the French determination to weaken Germany had far more, and caused both Wilson and Lloyd George to be suspicious of some of the French support given to Poland. Of the other members of the Supreme Council, Italy rather favoured the Poles, while Japan was indifferent, as her interests were not in question.

When the *Terms of Peace* were presented to the German Delegation on May 7, 1919, the Polish-German frontier was set forth in accordance with Lloyd George's rectification of that recommended by the Commission on Polish Affairs: Danzig was to be a Free City, and the fate of Marienwerder was to be decided by plebiscite, as was that of Allenstein. On May 29 the German Delegation addressed to the Supreme Council a voluminous document entitled *Observations on the Peace Terms*. In particular strong objection was taken to the loss of Upper Silesia, about which there was great excitement in Germany, the view being freely expressed that the Allies were bent on the dismemberment of the country and determined to prevent Germany from being a Great Power ever again. Though threats to the same effect had been made before and had come to nothing, Lloyd George was afraid that the Germans would refuse to sign the Peace Treaty, but in the Supreme Council he laid special stress on the arguments

advanced by the delegation which were cunningly adapted to Wilson's principles, and, winning the President to his side, he overbore Clemenceau, a plebiscite being decided on for this area, as the Germans were told on June 14. The Peace Treaty was signed at Versailles on June 28, 1919, the Polish signatories being Paderewski and Dmowski. Article 87 of the Treaty began: "Germany recognizes, as the Allied and Associated Powers have already recognized, the complete independence of Poland."

POLAND'S SUBSTANTIAL GAINS

Despite the plebiscites and the turning of Danzig into a Free City, Poland had made very substantial gains. Nearly the whole of Poznan, as well as a large part of West Prussia or Pomerania, had been restored to her, and she had access to the sea. Well might Dmowski say, in his book mentioned above, that no such great event had been recorded in Polish history since the second Peace of Thorn (Torun), which was concluded in 1466 with the Teutonic Knights, and by which they returned Pomerania to Poland. But there was one decided drawback. Though Poland's access to the sea through Danzig, which was placed as a Free City under the protection of the League of Nations, was guaranteed by special legislation, it was neither as free nor as secure as it would have been if Danzig had been attributed unreservedly to Poland, as the Commission on Polish Affairs recommended. In 1919 Danzig was undoubtedly German, and the compromise which gave it the status of a Free City caused it to remain German and utterly anti-Polish, though economically dependent on Poland for its very existence. Fortunately Pomerania lying west and south of it—what the Germans called the *Danziger Korridor*—was racially as Polish as Danzig was German; whatever dispute there might be about Danzig being historically Polish or German, there could be no gainsaying the fact that Pomerania was historically as well as ethnographically Polish, as the Allies maintained, and that therefore its restitution to Poland was an act of elementary justice, notwithstanding the other fact that

it separated East Prussia from the rest of Germany. As the Allies put it: "The interests which Germans in East Prussia, who number less than two millions, have in establishing a land connection with Germany, are less vital than the interests of the whole Polish nation in securing direct access to the sea."

In truth it was only in and through the "Corridor" that Poland had free access to the sea, as she soon was to find out: there was already a significant indication in the German opposition to the landing of Haller's troops at Danzig. What the Versailles Treaty did secure for Poland was the fixation of a considerable length of her frontier on the west; her frontier on the east was left indeterminate, and in the upshot she had to fix it for herself by hard fighting. The treaty was not too popular in Poland, but the Sejm ratified it on July 31, 1919, by 285 votes to 41. On June 28, Paderewski and Dmowski also signed the Minorities Treaty, which was even less popular because of its unilateral character; for instance, it applied to the German Minority in Poland, but not to the Polish Minority in Germany; objection was taken to it on similar grounds by other States similarly affected, as well as by Poland; but none of the Principal Allies made treaties according like treatment to their own National Minorities.

POLISH MINORITIES TREATY

The Polish Minorities Treaty provided equality in civil and political rights, and the right to use their own language, for all racial, linguistic and religious minorities, who also were entitled to organize their own religious, educational and charitable institutions. Where a minority formed a considerable proportion of the population of a district, it was given the right to have instruction in its own tongue in the primary public schools. It provided that all inhabitants of Poland, whether citizens or not, should enjoy life, liberty and the free exercise of their religion. At the Peace Conference Jews were prominent in agitating for and securing this Minorities Treaty; in fact, the alleged anti-Semitism of Poland was largely responsible for the

existence of the treaty, "outrages" on Jews in Vilna and Pinsk in April in the course of the fighting between the Poles and the Bolsheviks being reported with great exaggeration in the Press. It was in vain that the Polish Government protested that it was not anti-Semitic and that these "incidents" were terribly distorted.

Paderewski appointed a committee of investigation, but its effect on the clamour was small; an independent committee, under Morgenthau, an American Jew, appointed later by Wilson, at the request of Paderewski, to investigate and report, reduced the incidents to their proper proportions, but its report was not published till late in 1919; Jewish hostility to Poland continued to be marked at the Conference, and gave many people who were not Jews a false idea of the Polish people. Of course, the Polish Minorities Treaty was not the work of Jews alone, for it covered all the Polish national minorities—Ukrainian, White Russian, German and Lithuanian. But the Jews were particularly active and bitter. The true nature of the outrages on Jews reported in April was much the same as that of the "pogrom" reported in connexion with the struggle for Lwow in November, 1918, and already noted in this chapter as the beginning of the Jewish campaign against Poland. They were incidents in the fight for the eastern frontiers, regrettable but wellnigh inevitable.

FIGHT FOR THE EASTERN FRONTIERS

That fight was resumed in April, 1919. The Polish line was divided by the military situation into two sectors—from the centre to the north it confronted the Bolsheviks, and from the centre to the south it faced the Ukrainians. In March Lwow had again been closely invested by the latter. The Supreme Council intervened, and tried to bring about an armistice between the Poles and the Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia, but ineffectually, as truces which had been arranged on the spot were quickly broken. It next endeavoured to secure a settlement by negotiations between the Polish and Ukrainian

Delegations in Paris, and with this object in view set up a commission, with Botha as president, which prepared a draft armistice convention. The Ukrainians accepted, but the Poles rejected it, the reason given being that the security of Poland against the Bolsheviks would not be complete without the military occupation of Eastern Galicia. On May 27 the Supreme Council telegraphed to Pilsudski a threat to withdraw supplies and assistance from Poland if he did not accept its decisions; Pilsudski replied that Poland had reason to fear a combined attack of Bolsheviks and Germans, if the Peace Treaty was not accepted by Germany, and in view of such a contingency he thought it was essential to effect a linking up of the Polish and Rumanian forces. The Supreme Council did not carry out its threat, for meanwhile the situation on the Polish eastern front had undergone a tremendous change owing to the success of the Polish operations, both in the north and in the south.

By the end of March, 1919, the Polish forces in the field were sufficiently strong numerically, though still deficient in some respects, to undertake an offensive. Polish opinion in general and political circles in particular demanded that operations should first be started for the relief of Lwow and the complete recovery and permanent occupation of all Eastern Galicia—the driving out of the belligerent Ukrainians. This, however, was not the view taken by Pilsudski, whose conception of the whole situation in the East was of far wider range; he believed that the Ukrainians were much less dangerous than the Bolsheviks, and that his immediate business was to deal with the latter. He fully realized that the Soviet Government was every whit as Imperialistic as the Tsarist Government had been, and that it was therefore necessary for Poland to throw the Bolsheviks back to the east, as far as possible from her central, most Polish territory, and to hold them there.

There was another reason. The Supreme Council had done nothing about Poland's eastern frontier, for though it was supporting the Russian anti-Soviet forces, it had no clear, definite programme about Russia; it hesitated; what would be the position, it asked, if Bolshevism was overthrown, and it

was called on to fulfil the treaties made with Tsarist Russia? And in that case what about the Franco-Russian alliance? On April 9, 1919, Tsarist and other Russians, such as Sazonoff and Prince Lvoff, who had constituted in Paris a "Russian Political Conference," sent a Note protesting against the attribution of the *Kresy* to Poland, and proposing the line of the Bug as the Polish frontier. That frontier which abode in the mind of the Supreme Council was not what Pilsudski or, for that matter, the Poles as a whole were determined to secure; to make certain that the Bug would not be the frontier, Pilsudski, pursuing the policy that always commended itself to him, decided on presenting the Council with a *fait accompli*, and ordered the offensive to begin in the northern sector of the front, with the liberation of Vilna from the Bolsheviks as its chief objective. He drew up a plan of operations, led the army in person, and himself took part in the main attack. Fortunately for him the Bolsheviks were not in very strong force, and he had the advantage, too, of taking them by surprise.

VILNA CAPTURED

Concentrating his troops rapidly in secret, he carried to brilliant success a daring, if short, campaign, which, opening on April 16 with an assault on Lida, captured next day, gave him Vilna, after hard fighting, on April 21. South of the Niemen Novogrodek was occupied on April 18 and Baranowicze on the following day, the resistance of the Bolsheviks being beaten down in a sharp struggle of three days' duration. Towards the end of the month the Bolsheviks began a counter-offensive for the recapture of Vilna. On April 27 Pilsudski had to return to Warsaw, and Rydz-Smigly took over the chief command; by May 1 the Bolsheviks, though in superior strength, were repulsed, and Rydz-Smigly, passing to the offensive, materially advanced the Polish front within the next few days.

While these operations had been going on, the Polish commanders had all the time to "observe" the German and

Lithuanian forces on their left flank, from the Vilia to Grodno; the fear was always present of an understanding between the Germans, still in strong force and aggressive, in the Baltic region and the Bolsheviks; there were indications of such an understanding, and a joint attack by them was not an impossibility. Of themselves the Lithuanian troops were not formidable. The political feature of the campaign for Vilna, apart from its *fait-accomplí* value, was the proclamation Pilsudski addressed to "The People of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania," in which he spoke of the idea of federation, not of incorporation—Lithuania in federal union with Poland—in consonance with his fine conception of a Great Poland, which also envisaged White Russia and the Ukraine as partners in one federated State. The proclamation emphasized the difference in his point of view from that of Dmowski, who advocated a unitary State, and who some weeks before had carried a proposal in that sense in the Polish Delegation against Pilsudski's representatives, as already recorded. Vilna also figured in the Jewish propaganda against Poland. There were many Jews in that city, but instead of there being an organized pogrom of them, as was asserted, they suffered loss of life and property in the fighting for Vilna in precisely the same way and for the same reasons as in that for Lwow.

EASTERN GALICIA OCCUPIED

Pilsudski next dealt with the south sector—the Ukrainian. He placed J. Haller in command of the operations, and two of the divisions that had come from France were to take part in them, but when the Polish offensive was about to open, the Supreme Council intervened and forbade the utilization of these troops. Pilsudski thereupon made a new plan, moved fresh troops up to the front, regrouped others, and on May 14-15, 1919, the whole Polish line advanced to the attack in Eastern Galicia and in Volhynia, the total strength of the force engaged being 50,000 men, with 200 guns. After a few days' fighting, the Poles were completely successful, the

Ukrainians falling back in disorder. On May 20 the Poles were in possession of Drohobycz and the oil region; farther north they pushed eastward to Luck (Lutsk) and Brody; in the extreme south they were in Halicz and Stanislawov on May 27, and there they linked up with Rumanian forces. It was at this juncture, when the advance was at its height, that the Supreme Council again intervened and threatened to cut Poland off from military supplies if the campaign was pressed. For some days there was little movement, but on June 8 the Ukrainians, who had reorganized part of their beaten troops, began a counter-offensive from Trembovla, which bent back the Polish line in the south for a considerable distance, and brought Pilsudski himself into the field.

Reinforcements were hurried to the front, and the Poles again attacked, recaptured Brzezany, June 28-29, and regained most of the ground they had lost, but it was not till the middle of July that they reached the Zbrucz, the old frontier between Austria and Russia, and the limit of their advance in the extreme south. The remnants of the forces of the Ukrainian Republic of the West (in Eastern Galicia) were thrown across that river, and they joined up with the troops of the other Ukrainian Republic (Russian Ukraine), which had already been severely handled by the Bolsheviks; taken between the Soviet troops and those of Poland—attacked on two fronts—they were in a desperate military position. They had been driven out of Kieff and Odessa in March, and from Rovno and Dubno in May, the region they still held being small and narrow; in July they began negotiations for an accommodation with the Poles, who in Volhynia were now in direct contact with the Bolsheviks. But so far as Eastern Galicia was concerned, Pilsudski had another *fait accompli* for the consideration of the Supreme Council, which accordingly changed its attitude, and on June 25, 1919, authorized the Polish Government to occupy Eastern Galicia as far as the Zbrucz, and to introduce a civil administration. Thus, before the Treaty of Versailles was signed, Pilsudski had carried forward in the east the probable frontier of Poland to a line that covered part of the *Kresy* and the

whole of Eastern Galicia. The Supreme Council, however, was still far from a definite pronouncement on the Polish-Russian frontier. In July-August, 1919, further fighting took place between the Poles and the Bolsheviks in the north, Minsk being taken by the former on August 8 and an advance to the Beresina achieved before the end of that month. Not till the beginning of 1920 was the struggle resumed.

The second of the Peace Treaties, the Treaty of St. Germain, was signed on September 10, 1919, by Austria, who recognized by it the independence of Poland and accepted her frontiers as these had been or were ultimately determined.

DISSENSIONS IN THE SEYM

During the spring and summer of 1919 the sessions of the Sejm, not infrequently heated and even turbulent, showed the development in practice of the ideas which divided the Right and the Left, and the bitterness with which these ideas were maintained. Dissensions in the Sejm caused Paderewski to return from Paris, where he had a distinguished diplomatic success in the Conference, to Warsaw in May for the purpose of easing the political strife by the use of his gift of conciliation; on May 23 the Sejm passed a vote of confidence in him and the Government, and he went back to Paris. He had a similar experience in July when once more he had to go to Warsaw—that time in connexion with the acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles. He was supported by the Right, which continued to be inspired by Dmowski, who remained in Paris. On April 15 the National Committee had passed a resolution dissolving itself, but it continued to function as a committee of liquidation for four months longer, and its attitude was reflected in the Sejm in hostility to the Left and to Pilsudski, who kept a watchful eye on its proceedings, but gave his chief attention to the army. The Sejm had been convoked by Pilsudski to draw up a Constitution, but it was not till May 3, the 128th anniversary of the historic Constitution of 1791, that a Government draft was laid before the Sejm, which it did not

accept; on November 3, the Sejm produced a new draft, but it lay on the table for a long time. The economic and financial situation remained exceptionally difficult, but thanks to the nation's own efforts, backed by foreign advice and supplies, there was some slight improvement.

AGRARIAN REFORM

In the Sejm interest chiefly turned on the question of Agrarian Reform, to which Pilsudski had referred in his speech at its opening. The Right, which included many landowners, was opposed to any marked change respecting the land, but the political power of the peasantry, with its numerous deputies in the Sejm, and the support of the Left generally, was sufficiently strong to effect the passing on July 10, 1919, of a drastic resolution for the redistribution of the possession of the soil, by taking their estates from the large proprietors and handing them over for parcellation among the peasants. Of the large proprietors there were about 16,000, whereas two-thirds of the mass of the agricultural population had less than five hectares, or 12-13 acres, to each family, which was insufficient for its subsistence. While this great inequality suggested some alteration in the ownership of land, the pronounced discontent among the peasants, together with the possible influence on them of Bolshevism, made a sweeping measure of reform appear imperative. The main clause (which was carried by a single vote in a Sejm of about 360 members) of this resolution was the limiting of the amount of land to be held by anybody to 60 hectares (about 150 acres) and to 100 hectares (about 250 acres) according to the situation of the property in industrial or purely agricultural districts throughout Poland, except in the *Kresy*, where properties might extend to 400 hectares (about 1,000 acres). The Sejm recorded its decision, and though no law dealing with the matter was enacted till the following year, the peasant agitation was stayed for a while. Unemployment and unrest among the workers were mitigated to some extent by steps taken by the Government to assist in restarting

factories and mills, but the rebuilding of the economic life of the country simultaneously with carrying on the fight for the frontiers imposed an enormous strain on the young State.

Of questions still open in 1919 before the Supreme Council or undecided—the plebiscites, the Eastern frontier, and Teschen, the last showed itself as intractable as any. After a cordial meeting at Prague of Paderewski with Masaryk, a conference was set up on July 20, 1919, at Cracow, Stanislas Grabski and Udrzal respectively representing Poland and Czechoslovakia, but no agreement was reached. Early in September following, the claims of the two States were argued before the Supreme Council by Benesh and Dmowski, the result being that a plebiscite was ordered to be held in Teschen, and similarly in Orava and Spisz, a decision that pleased neither the Poles nor the Czechoslovaks, and in the end was inoperative. All these open questions had their repercussions on the various parties and groups in the Sejm, which Paderewski found more and more difficult to manage, though he spent himself and his money lavishly in the service of his country. He had ceased to dominate the Sejm; it dominated him, and his authority crumbled away. Perhaps it was the penalty of the artistic temperament and of the incessant nervous tension to which he was subjected by his encounters with the politicians; but most of all it was his lack of a strong constructive programme that was fatal to him; fertile in improvisations, he had no settled policy with continuity of effort—difficult, but just what Poland needed.

PADEREWSKI RESIGNS

At the beginning of November, 1919, Paderewski returned to Warsaw, after a stay of some length in Paris on the nation's business. He found the political situation quite beyond his control. Pilsudski, who was cold towards him, advised him to resign; but he could not persuade himself that he would be unable to constitute a solid majority; he tried and failed. The Left particularly opposed him, and the Right was lukewarm. A crisis ensued which lasted some weeks; it became acute when

L. Skrzynski, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, clashed with Paderewski, his Chief, and resigned; Paderewski's colleagues fell away from him. Suddenly, on November 27, the Marshal of the Sejm announced Paderewski's resignation, though he had not resigned! In fact, he was making another attempt to form a Cabinet, but that, too, came to nothing. The decision of the Supreme Council, as November closed, to give to Poland a mandate to administer Eastern Galicia for twenty-five years was regarded by the Poles as a severe blow to their hopes, and in effect finished Paderewski's political career, as they put the blame for it on him. At Pilsudski's request—ironical, considering their relations at the time—Paderewski attempted to form another combination, but with the same disheartening result. Realizing at last that he was no longer wanted, he resigned on December 9, 1919, and retired into private life. But he had done a great work for Poland; for months he had been the necessary man holding together Pilsudski and Dmowski, Warsaw and Paris; and now his work was over. Superb orator, splendid diplomatist, ardent patriot, he was not a shining success as a politician. After two or three years, during which he occasionally represented Poland, he returned to the art in which his genius was supreme, and once more ravished the world.

CHAPTER IV

THE CRISIS OF FATE

1920

1

POLAND'S fight for her eastern frontiers developed in 1920 into a desperate struggle for her very existence. That she emerged from it triumphant at the moment when the rest of the world supposed she had lost was due, first, to a tremendous revival of national feeling, purpose and courage which expressed her invincible will to live, and, secondly, to the military genius of Pilsudski, who in the darkest days of that crisis of her fate turned humiliating and disastrous defeat into glorious and decisive victory. In 1924, while living in retirement, Pilsudski published at Warsaw his book entitled *Rok 1920* (The Year 1920), an extraordinarily frank, vivid and illuminating account of the later stages of the war between Poland and Soviet Russia. In it he pointed out, rightly, that the beginning of this war dated from 1918 during the "springtime of the free life" of Poland after the Captivity—a free life menaced from the start by the advance of the Bolshevik forces by prearrangement with the Germans as they withdrew from the east. He stated that, as he then had planned, he had pushed the Soviet line—the front of the World Revolution in the west—in 1919 as far to the east, and therefore as far away from the essential Poland as possible, in order to give his country the opportunity of organizing itself in accordance with its own ideas.

Pilsudski's plan also included, as has been seen, giving to the peoples of the ethnographic non-Russian countries of the borderlands the chance of escaping from Bolshevik domination and tyranny. In consonance with his policy Poland in December, 1919, signed a military convention with the Government of Latvia, the result of which was seen in the capture from the

Bolsheviks of Dvinsk (Dunaburg) on January 3, 1920, by combined Polish and Latvian forces. This and further action straightened out the Polish front on the Dvina (Duna); the Poles withdrew from Dvinsk and other Latvian territory. Another sign of this policy was the presence of Polish representatives at a conference of the Baltic States held on January 15 at Helsingfors. The term Baltic States covered Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as well as Poland, and the general aim of the conference was defence in common against Bolshevik attack. Early in February, 1920, however, Estonia concluded a peace treaty with Soviet Russia, who had defeated Yudenitch's attempt on Petrograd, but had failed afterwards to take Narva from the Estonians. The first Baltic State to make peace with the Bolsheviks was Estonia; the other Baltic States signed peace treaties with them in the course of 1920. The Soviet Government recognized the independence of these States, but none the less Russia remained the chief preoccupation of all of them in that critical year.

SOVIET MOVES

After leaving the eastern frontiers of Poland in doubt for months the Supreme Council issued on December 8, 1919, a declaration fixing, without prejudice to a final decision, a provisional frontier, corresponding with that which had been suggested by the Russian Political Conference, as stated in the previous chapter. Later this frontier came to be known as the "Curzon line," from Lord Curzon's Note to the Soviet, July 11, 1920; it made the Bug Poland's eastern boundary, and no Pole could accept it as just. In January, 1920, Sazonoff expressed his approval of this frontier, and said that it ought to serve as a basis for peace negotiations between Russia and Poland. As a matter of fact Chicherin, the Soviet Commissary for Foreign Affairs, proposed by wireless on December 22, 1919, to Poland to begin negotiations for peace, but the Polish Government made no response, as it considered the message much too vague.

On January 29, 1920, the Soviet sent a formal Note to Warsaw, signed by Lenin himself, as well as by Trotsky and Chicherin, stating that it recognized "without reserve the independence and sovereignty of the Polish republic," and requesting the opening of negotiations for peace. On February 4 Poland replied that she took cognizance of the Note, would examine the situation, and thereafter dispatch her answer. The situation was discussed in Warsaw by the Commission of Foreign Affairs, which had been set up by the Sejm, and by the Commission of the Army; both commissions sat together for the purpose. Polish diplomatic representatives asked Paris and London for advice; the former was against accepting the Soviet's proposal, and the latter oracularly said that Poland would know best what wisdom dictated.

What was the situation of Poland *vis-à-vis* Soviet Russia at the time? This really resolved itself into the question, Could Poland trust the Soviet when the World Revolution remained the chief plank in the Bolshevik platform? In the west Poland lay right across the path of the World Revolution, and it was impossible for the Poles not to suspect that the Soviet's proposal was made to gain time. During 1919 the political and military position of the Soviet had immensely improved; the counter-revolutionary armies of Yudenitch, Kolchak and Denikin had been utterly defeated, despite the support of the Entente Powers, who had been compelled to withdraw their expeditionary forces from the north and south of European Russia, as from Asia. Huge quantities of war material of the most up-to-date kind which had been supplied by the Allies to the counter-revolutionaries fell into the hands of the Bolsheviks.

When the civil war had terminated, the Soviet was free to turn its attention abroad: in 1919 the war with Poland had been a secondary matter in presence of the struggle with the counter-revolutionary armies, and that fact, as Pilsudski knew very well, accounted for the relatively easy advance eastward of the Poles; in 1920 the position was fundamentally different. At the very moment when the Soviet was proposing peace it

was hurrying troops to the Polish front, as the Polish reconnaissance service reported, and was making ready for a fresh campaign. Pilsudski was under no illusion. He could not but be aware that besides gaining time for concentrating its forces, the Soviet purposed by preaching peace to shake the ardour of the Polish soldiery, and at the same time to conciliate and capture pacifist opinion in Western countries and direct it against Poland, already maliciously pictured as an Imperialist State, not only by Soviet propaganda, but also by German.

In the West it was not generally known that on April 9, 1918, the Council of the People's Commissars at Moscow, in a spell of revolutionary disinterestedness, had annulled by decree the conventions with Prussia and Austria concerning the partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century as contrary to the principle of the self-determination of nations. The effect of this decree was the giving up by Russia of all those territories which belonged to Poland before the first partition in 1772, among them being present Lithuania and Vilna. But when the Soviet Government grasped the implications of the decree it set about limiting and "interpreting" it, and did its best to nullify it. But the decree was not rescinded, and had an important bearing, in a sense favourable to Poland, on the treaty between the Soviet and Lithuania, of August 12, 1920, as it made that treaty null and void, so far as its territorial clauses were concerned, because Russia had abandoned all claims to the former Polish lands.

POLISH ARMY UNIFIED

By the beginning of 1920 the Polish Army, owing to the intensive work of Pilsudski and his subordinates, had grown to 600,000 men, in 21 divisions of infantry and 7 brigades of cavalry, drawn from every part of the country, including Poznan—*an exemplification of the unity Poland had now achieved.* The unification of the army had been celebrated by a solemn service at Cracow on October 19, 1919, but in some respects it was incomplete, as, for example, most of the officers preserved the traditions of the military training they

had received in the German, Austrian or Russian armies. To remedy this Pilsudski adopted for all arms the French system of military instruction, which was furthered by the French Military Mission under General Henrys. The armament of the army still left much to be desired, but purchases in France and other countries had given most of the Polish soldiers an appearance very different from that which they had had a few months before. Many of these men were hardened to war, but others were young, half-trained recruits.

THE SKULSKI CABINET

Public opinion in Poland was not unanimous respecting Pilsudski's policy. The winter of 1919-20 proved exceptionally severe, and the financial and economic situation, already very bad, grew worse. The Polish mark depreciated, and prices rose. Sickness increased and typhus was prevalent. The political situation was confused. After the resignation of Paderewski a new Cabinet had been formed on December 13, 1919, the Prime Minister being Leopold Skulski, a chemical engineer, who had made a reputation as Mayor of Lodz, his native city. He had acquired a leading position in the Sejm, in which he was supported by a strong combination of the moderate elements of various groups. But his Government was only partly taken from the Sejm, the remainder being composed of experts and technicians from outside it. Stanislas Patek, who had been a Pilsudski member of the Polish Delegation at the Peace Conference, became Foreign Minister. Wojciechowski retained the portfolio of the Interior, and Ladislas Grabski took that of Finance, not as a National Democrat, but as a specialist. Skulski's programme included the elaboration of the Constitution, agrarian reform, national consolidation, and energetic action for the benefit of the poorer classes of the community; but he was unable to carry it out even in part. His chief backing came from the Populist Peasants; in the Cabinet there were two Ministers and outside it an Under-Secretary of State as representatives of the Populists; yet the peasants opposed every

movement for victualling the cities and large towns, where bread and other foodstuffs became scarcer and dearer daily. Attacked by the National Democrats of the Right and the Socialists of the Left, his position soon became precarious.

One splendid feature of Skulski's administration was the taking over of Pomerania from the Germans, in accordance with the Versailles Treaty, in January, 1920; on February 10 following, the Polish flag was raised once more on the shores of the Baltic, the whole restitution a tardy and only half-complete act of historical justice. The Germans evacuated Danzig on January 24, and in mid-February Sir R. Tower was appointed High Commissioner of the Free City by and for the League of Nations. Another striking incident of the first three months of 1920 was that Pilsudski became Marshal of Poland, a title that was new in the Polish Army. A commission of generals, known as the Commission of Grades (of officers), invited him to assume the title of Marshal, and on March 19 he intimated his acceptance; on April 3 he was gazetted to that grade by an army order signed by the Minister of War. Prior to that date Pilsudski, though usually addressed as General, had held no fixed rank either in the Legions or in the Polish Army; it was really the army rather than the Government which proclaimed him Marshal.

POLAND REPLIES TO THE SOVIET

Patek on March 27, 1920, replied to the Soviet Note of January 29, and set forth the conditions under which Poland would agree to enter into negotiations for peace. These were: (1) the annulment of the crime of the partitions of Poland and the disannexation of Polish territory taken by Russia; (2) the recognition of the States that had issued from the Revolution of 1917; (3) the restitution of all the property of the Polish State within the frontier of 1772 (the first partition), and an indemnity for the losses sustained by the Poles in the war of 1914 and during the Revolution of 1917; (4) the ratification of the treaty by Russia; and (5) the fixation by Poland of the

status of the territories situated west of the 1772 frontier, in agreement with their peoples, who were to be called on to express their wishes by plebiscite. The Polish Note closed with a proposal to begin the negotiations on April 10 at Borisow, a small town near the front. On March 28 Chicherin in reply asked for the immediate suspension of hostilities on the whole front (so as to be free to deal with Wrangel, who was still in the field), and suggested that negotiations for peace should be begun in a town of Estonia. Three days later Patek (who knew about Wrangel) answered that Poland could not agree to an armistice, again proposed that the negotiations should take place at Borisow, and promised that hostilities would be suspended in that sector while the negotiations were proceeding. Chicherin then suggested Petrograd, Moscow or Warsaw for the meeting of the plenipotentiaries, but Patek stuck to Borisow as the most appropriate place—whereupon Chicherin, endeavouring to put Poland in the wrong, addressed a wireless message to the Allies stating that she was opposing peace by insisting that the negotiations should take place only in one particular town. But why the objection to Borisow, if peace was sincerely desired? In his book *My Life: The Rise and Fall of a Dictator*, Trotsky asserted, "We (the Soviet) strained every effort to avoid war. We spared no measure to achieve this end." If that had been the truth Borisow would not have been rejected by Chicherin. The Polish Government was now doubly certain that the Bolshevik peace proposal had not been made in good faith.

Patek's statement of Poland's conditions of peace adumbrated Pilsudski's conception of federalism; one condition demanded the recognition of the States that had come into existence on former Russian territory, such as the Baltic States; another condition postulated for Poland alone the right to establish the status of the peoples living in the *Kresy*, the regions west of the 1772 frontier. The publication of the Soviet's proposal increased the strife between the Poles who supported Pilsudski's federalism and those who advocated incorporation, mainly the National Democrats. Pilsudski's

opponents were in favour of coming to terms quickly with the Soviet. They did not see why Poland should concern herself so particularly with the fate of the States "issued from Russia," and their aim was to "incorporate" only a part of the regions west of the frontier of 1772, the rest being left to the Soviet. They did not sympathize with Pilsudski's desire to establish a White Russian State with its capital at Minsk or a Ukrainian State with its capital at Kieff, and did not accept his view that these States would be the "natural allies of Poland." These conflicting policies found sharp reflection afresh in the Sejm and throughout the country. They perhaps explained why Pilsudski's plan of federalism was never placed properly before the public in the West and the way thus made all the easier for the unscrupulous propaganda of the Bolsheviks among the working classes in England, France and elsewhere to the detriment of Poland, who was accused of making a "wanton attack on Free Russia." Free Russia!

PILSUDSKI ATTACKS

With political parties and groups nearly balanced when it came to a real test of strength in the Sejm, the net result of their dissensions in the spring of 1920 was that Pilsudski himself directed the policy of Poland. Aware of the growing menace of the Soviet on his eastern front, he resolved not to await attack but to anticipate it. The anxious question he had to solve was the direction of his offensive south or north of the Pripet marshes which cut that front into the two great natural sectors. He chose the south, political considerations playing a part in his decision; his first objective was the liberation of the Ukraine from Bolshevik occupation; but he was also under the impression that there were concentrated in that quarter the bulk of the Russian troops which had been brought westward after the collapse of Denikin. His intention was that, having crushed those forces and freed the Ukraine, he would hand over the territory to the Ukrainians, and then attack the Bolsheviks in the northern sector. But the Ukrainians were in

a precarious position by the end of 1919; their main force had been beaten and its remnants had taken refuge in Poland; only small bands of their partisans were still in the field. Petlura, their best leader, had fled into Poland; abandoning the claim to Eastern Galicia, he asked Pilsudski to aid him against the Bolsheviks. On April 23, 1920, a treaty was signed at Warsaw between them; it declared that Ukrainia was not interested in Eastern Galicia, and that it accepted the 1772 frontier; it postulated collaboration with Poland against exterior aggression.

KIEFF OCCUPIED

Three days later the Marshal launched his offensive. It had been prepared in secret and took the Bolsheviks by surprise. Led by Pilsudski in person, the Polish Army, supported by Ukrainian detachments under Petlura, made a swift advance to the Dnieper, no serious resistance being encountered. Kieff was occupied without a struggle on May 7. Petlura issued a proclamation calling on the Ukrainian people to rise and defend their national independence. Pilsudski also issued a proclamation, in which he stated that the Polish troops would remain in the Ukraine only till a regular Ukrainian Government was established. The Bolsheviks countered these proclamations by calling on the peasants of the Ukraine to resist the violation of Russian territory by "Polish lords," and to prevent "Polish capitalism" from exploiting Russian workers and peasants. On May 5 the newspapers of Moscow published a letter from Brusiloff to the Soviet Chief of Staff, which, among other things, said that the Polish intervention in territory which had belonged from all time to the Russian people must be repulsed by force.

It was in Russia rather than in the Ukraine that the real repercussion of Pilsudski's offensive was felt the most. In this connexion Trotsky, in the book already quoted, said: "The country (Russia) made one more truly heroic effort. The capture of Kieff by the Poles, in itself devoid of military significance (*sic*), did us great service; it awakened the country. Again I had

to make the tour of armies and cities, mobilizing men and resources." Naturally Trotsky said nothing of the concentration of the Bolshevik forces that had already taken place on the northern Polish front. Outside Russia Bolshevik propaganda became more and more active and venomous against Poland, who was held up to the execration of the Western working man as the aggressor, tyrannical and bloody-minded, out to trample on the proletariat; the Bolsheviks were quite clever enough to get their charges believed by a great many people.

Pilsudski returned from the front to Warsaw on May 18, 1920. He was given a great reception; a *Te Deum* was sung in St. Alexander's Church, and the Sejm held an extraordinary session to acclaim the victorious Marshal. For the moment the clamour of his enemies was hushed, but it soon broke out again. Dmowski, recovered from the serious illness that had laid him aside in Paris in September, 1919, appeared in Warsaw in the middle of May. Five years had passed since he had been in the capital, and then it had been in the hands of the Russians, to be quickly succeeded by the Germans: now it was Polish—but in the hands of Pilsudski, his political foe! On May 22 he had a long interview with the Marshal, but what occurred on that occasion was never fully disclosed; that they reached no agreement was plain, because the attacks of the National Democrats on Pilsudski's policy of federalism took on fresh violence, and of course evoked equally violent retorts from his friends and supporters. Soon the anti-federalists had their innings, for the victory in the Ukraine proved short-lived. Presently it was evident that the easy advance of the Poles on Kieff had been in some measure a matter of calculation on the part of the Bolshevik Command—a ruse to draw off Polish troops from the northern sector where the Bolshevik attack was about to begin.

SOVIET HELD IN THE NORTH

Tukhachevsky, the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet armies in the north, a man only twenty-eight years of age, had been formerly a sub-lieutenant of the Imperial Guard, but

despite his inexperience he showed himself by no means an incompetent soldier. With the 15th Bolshevik Army, comprising six infantry divisions and one of cavalry, he began an enveloping movement on May 15, 1920, of the Polish left wing. To oppose him the Poles had their 1st Army, which consisted of three infantry divisions and a brigade of cavalry. The superior strength of the Bolsheviks speedily gave them the advantage, and the Poles were forced back a considerable distance. Lower down the line Tukhachevsky attacked Borisow—the place made famous by the abortive peace negotiations—bringing into action the 16th Bolshevik Army against the 4th Polish Army, which succeeded, however, in repulsing the assault. The resistance, too, of the 1st Army stiffened, and reinforced it held the Bolsheviks at bay near Molodeczno; behind it an Army of Reserve, under Sosnkowski, was formed consisting of four infantry divisions, a cavalry brigade and other troops. Close to the 4th Army two infantry divisions were concentrated. These fresh forces attacked the Bolsheviks with success, and nearly caught them as in a vice, but they contrived to make good their retreat, though with heavy losses. The general result of the fighting was that the Bolsheviks were pushed back nearly to the positions from which they had started, and the Poles stood on the line of the Dvina, Auta and Beresina as the first week in June closed. There followed three weeks of calm in this sector; Tukhachevsky was awaiting developments in the south; they were unfavourable to the Poles, and weakened their general position in the field.

SOVIET SUCCESS IN THE SOUTH

At the beginning of June Pilsudski's plan was to hold his front in the northern sector and to attack in the southern, in which in the last days of May Budienny, the Red cavalry leader, had become active. Pilsudski designed to make an end of Budienny and thereafter to throw the bulk of his forces against Tukhachevsky in the north; but the plan failed. At the head of 12,000 horse, with 300 machine guns and 50 guns,

Budienny pierced the Polish front on June 5, and two days later executed successful raids on the Polish depôts and lines of communication far in the rear which produced disorder and panic among the Poles. The Polish 3rd Army was nearly surrounded in Kieff, but evacuating that city on June 13 effected its retreat to the west. A fresh line was taken up, but it could not be held, Budienny's rapidity of movement forcing the Poles to a further retreat. Later a concentric attack by the Poles, under Rydz-Smigly, on the Bolsheviks was unsuccessful, Budienny crossed the Horyn on July 3, and pressed on to Rovno, which he occupied two days afterwards. The Poles had to abandon the Ukraine. Pilsudski's plan for the southern sector had completely broken down, with heavy losses in men and material. One cause of the failure had been the antagonism of the Ukrainian peasantry, about whose sympathies Pilsudski had been misled by his agents.

In Warsaw the political situation showed no signs of betterment. On June 9, 1920, the Skulski Government resigned, the immediate cause being a conflict between Skulski and Witos over the appointment of an Acting Foreign Minister during the temporary absence of Patek. A Ministerial crisis ensued which lasted fifteen days, as it was difficult to solve, partly because of the usual dissensions among the groups, and partly because of the military situation at the front. A combination of the Populists under Witos and the Socialists under Daszynski was formed, but it lacked the necessary support in the Sejm, and was obnoxious to the National Democrats.

FIRST GRABSKI CABINET

On June 24 a new Ministry was constituted by Grabski, who retained five of his colleagues of the Skulski Cabinet, and gave three portfolios to State functionaries, leaving three unfilled. Sapieha became Foreign Minister—he was Polish Minister in London at the moment; and Narutowicz was appointed Minister of Public Works. The Cabinet was evidently a makeshift affair, and little confidence was felt in it. Pilsudski had openly ex-

pressed his opinion that a Cabinet drawn from the Left was desirable, and had reiterated his wish that the broad masses of the population should be the foundation of the State. Meanwhile the military situation had been going from bad to worse in the southern sector, as narrated above, and the National Democrats in the Sejm and in their newspapers continued their bitter criticisms of Pilsudski; what happened next in the northern sector gave additional point to their attacks on him.

SOVIET SECOND OFFENSIVE IN THE NORTH

Tukhachevsky, who had been biding his time during the successful operations of the Soviet forces in the Ukraine, launched his second offensive in the north on July 4, 1920. Two days before he had issued an order to his troops in which he said: "The destinies of the World Revolution will be settled in the West. Our way towards world-wide conflagration passes over the corpse of Poland." He invited his soldiers to "avenge the dishonouring of Kieff, and to drown the criminal Government of Pilsudski in the blood of the crushed Polish Army." He concluded with the cry: "Forward on Vilna, Minsk, Warsaw! March!" Words could not have been found to express more clearly and unmistakably the manner in which the Soviet regarded Poland as the State which barred the road to the World Revolution in the West. Nor was there anything new in such expressions; Trotsky had made use of them before; the Russians in the armies of Tukhachevsky were familiar with them from the speeches and writings of the Bolshevik commissars who accompanied their officers.

The Soviet had more than 200,000 men, divided into four armies, in the fighting line. The Polish forces, arranged in three armies, with Szeptycki in chief command, numbered about 125,000 men, none too well equipped, whereas their enemies had the benefit of the excellent and plentiful French or British material which had been taken from the defeated counter-revolutionary generals. Nowhere were the Poles in very strong force, and the superior weight of the Bolsheviks

soon made itself felt, the Polish front being broken on the second day of the fighting. On the night of July 6-7 Tukhachevsky forced the passage of the Beresina, and the Poles fell back in disorder. Constantly menaced by an enveloping movement of their left wing they gave way on the Dvina and shortly afterwards along the whole front north of the Pripet.

SOVIET SWIFT ADVANCE

Vilna fell on July 14, and Grodno was surprised on July 20; the line of the Niemen was lost. Pilsudski wished to stop the retreat on the line of the Bug, but the Bolsheviks took Brest-Litovsk on August 1, and their advance guards were approaching Malkin, but there the Poles held the Reds up for more than a week. For a brief breathing space the retreat, which had gone on with hardly a respite for a month, and had covered a distance of nearly 300 miles, was stayed. About the same time the Poles in the southern sector checked the army of Budienny and captured Brody, a victory which relieved the pressure in the direction of Lwow. It had been Pilsudski's intention to make a counter-attack on the Bolshevik rear with a mass of manœuvre from Brest and the Bug, but with the fall of Brest he had to change his plans; for the same reason the advantage at Brody was not pressed. The new plan he formed had the same idea behind it, but the terrain had to be shifted. On August 2 the Marshal returned from the front to Warsaw, where the situation was extremely tense.

POLISH COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

A week after the Grabski Government had entered on office the Prime Minister made a speech in the Sejm in which he set forth the absolute necessity of constituting a Council for the Defence of the State (*Rada Obrony Panstwa*). He said that the existence of the State was at stake, and exhorted the nation to support the army which was fighting its battles in the field against great odds. No means, he added, would be neglected for concluding an honourable peace, but it was not in sight.

Next day, July 1, 1920, the Sejm adopted a Bill creating the Council; its president was Pilsudski as Chief of the State, and its members consisted of representatives of the Sejm, the Government and the army; it was given power to decide all questions appertaining to the conduct of the war and the conclusion of peace. The parties of the Left, however, agreed to this measure only after receiving assurances that the Grabski Government would retire and be replaced by another Government on a broad basis in which they would have an adequate place. Negotiations began forthwith for this new Government, but not with quick success, and in the meantime the Polish forces were retreating under pressure of the enemy. The Council appealed to the whole Polish people to rise in arms against the Bolshevik invaders, and did not appeal in vain.

Until the Soviet troops were virtually on them the Poles, in the mass, had taken no lively interest in the war; the front was a long way off, and home politics with the struggles of parties engrossed them; with the battle front coming nearer and nearer, things were entirely different, and politics lost their attraction. To stimulate the patriotism of the peasantry, then busy in the harvest fields, the Sejm passed into law the resolution on Agrarian Reform which had stood on its books since July, 1919.

For the regular army the classes from 1890 to 1894 were called up in July. Volunteers offered themselves by the thousand from all ranks of society, and were first enrolled by General Joseph Haller as an independent unit under the title of the Volunteer Army; politics entered, however, into this matter, as the National Democrats tried to play Haller off against Pilsudski; finally the volunteers were either added to the regular army as individuals or incorporated in Volunteer Divisions which existed as such till the end of the war; there were several regiments of volunteer cavalry. In all more than 100,000 men volunteered. Women also answered the call, as had always been the case in Poland in times of great national stress; a Legion of Women was formed; many women came forward willingly to work beside the men in the trenches. In short, the

national spirit not only revived, it soared to wonderful heights of devotion and self-sacrifice.

POLAND APPEALS TO THE ALLIES

But more than the human material was needed. Poland lacked the other material of war—arms, munitions and money. The Polish Government appealed for help to the Supreme Council in conference at Spa, July 5-16, 1920, Grabski appearing there in person to plead the Polish cause. His reception was frigid, but he did obtain a hearing on July 10. Lloyd George was not more friendly to Poland than he had been before, but promised assistance if she agreed (1) to renounce all ideas of conquest; (2) to refer to the Supreme Council all questions in dispute, including Danzig and Teschen; (3) to withdraw her forces to the Curzon line (the Bug) and to a point 50 kilometres southwest of Lwow (which meant giving up Vilna and district in the north and most of Eastern Galicia, including Lwow, in the south). So much for Poland; to the Bolsheviks he said that their forces must not advance beyond a line 50 kilometres from that occupied by the Polish forces—if they did advance in spite of this prohibition, the Allies would give their whole support to Poland. He wound up by stating that an armistice conference would be constituted in London between Soviet Russia on the one side, and Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Finland on the other; representatives of Eastern Galicia would also be invited to attend. Grabski agreed, for he could see nothing else to do. But the Soviet would not agree, for when the British Government conveyed these decisions to Moscow Chicherin coolly replied that England had not the standing in the matter which qualified her to intervene, and that Poland must treat with the Soviet direct. Thus Grabski's action in agreeing was virtually nullified.

A Note was sent from London asking the Soviet to declare its intentions, and stating that if these were not made known, the Allies would support Poland with all the means at their disposal; a similar statement was made in the French Chamber

by Millerand, then Prime Minister of France. At the same time England insisted that Poland should ask the Bolsheviki for an armistice, and this the Polish Government did on July 22, but the Soviet procrastinated, which was nothing unusual in its diplomacy, and in this case had a reason, as it thought it was on the crest of a great wave of victory that would presently overwhelm and submerge the Polish forces. Again the Bolsheviki were playing for time, their expectation now being that they would make peace with a Poland that had become Bolshevik too—their real objective in this war, as Tukhachevsky's order of the day on July 2 had made abundantly clear. The negotiations preparatory to a meeting were spun out to July 30, when Polish plenipotentiaries entered the Bolshevik front, but without obtaining an armistice from the Soviet; they returned to Warsaw in a few days. A second peace delegation left Warsaw for Minsk on August 13 and remained there for three weeks, without result.

CONSEQUENCES OF POLISH REVERSES

Poland's reverses in the field had other consequences besides Grabski's capitulation to Lloyd George. Grabski had agreed that all questions in dispute, including Danzig and Teschen, should be referred to the Supreme Council. On June 14, 1920, the Free City had elected a Constituent Assembly, the composition of which was anti-Polish; it was certain that the Constitution the Assembly produced would be hostile to Poland, and that there would be trouble between the Danzigers and the Poles. But as all this was the business of the League of Nations under the Versailles Treaty, it did not come specially before the Spa Conference. Teschen did. This difficult question, which brought into play historical and economic claims on the part of Czechoslovakia as against the principle of self-determination urged by Poland, had so far not found a solution, as the plebiscite the Supreme Council had ordered proved unworkable. A proposal to refer the matter to King Albert of Belgium as arbiter came to naught. On July 10 at Spa Grabski

and Benesh signed a protocol renouncing the plebiscite and requesting the Supreme Council to make a definite settlement; the Supreme Council referred the question to the Ambassadors' Conference, which had the whole subject threshed out afresh, Poland being represented by Paderewski, specially delegated for the occasion, and Czechoslovakia by Benesh; experts on both sides were heard. After much discussion a settlement was reached in an agreement by Poland and Czechoslovakia on July 28, not only for Teschen but also for Orava and Spisz. Teschen was divided into two unequal parts, the larger going to Czechoslovakia, who also obtained most of Orava and Spisz.

Paderewski signed the agreement on July 30 on behalf of Poland, after protesting in a letter to Cambon, who presided over the Ambassadors' Conference, that however sincerely the Polish Government wished to execute strictly and loyally its contractual obligations, it would never be able to convince the nation that justice had been done. On his side Benesh declared his regret that Czechoslovakia had not been given in their entirety historic frontiers to which she was entitled, but hoped for compensation in peace between the two States and their better relations. Neither country, however, was really satisfied; feeling in Poland was particularly bitter, for the Poles, then reeling before the Bolshevik invasion, thought it was a case of *Vae victis!* Some years were still to elapse before friendly relations were established, though enjoined by their common interests.

In that same month of July Polish feeling had been deeply stirred by the result of the plebiscites for Allenstein and Marienwerder; they went in favour of Germany, and here again the Poles thought that if they had not been preoccupied by the war with the Bolsheviks there might have been a different story to tell. Naturally enough the Germans rejoiced, and were more and more persistent in maintaining that Poland was merely an ephemeral State—a *Saisonstaat*, doomed to an early demise. Another event of importance in July also bore heavily on the Poles, but it came direct out of the war with the Soviet. On July 12 the Soviet Government recognized the independence

of Lithuania by the Treaty of Moscow, signed by Chicherin for Russia and by Smetona for Lithuania; the treaty was in effect one of military alliance, and it ceded Vilna and the Vilna district to the Lithuanians. The position of the Allies respecting Lithuania was that they had recognized her as a State *de facto*; no mention of Lithuania was made in the Treaty of Versailles. At Spa Grabski had agreed that her representatives should sit in the conference Lloyd George had proposed for a settlement with the Soviet.

ALLIED MISSIONS GO TO WARSAW

At Spa Lloyd George had promised Grabski, in return for accepting the onerous conditions imposed, that the Allies would support the Poles. After consulting Millerand, Lloyd George decided to send an Anglo-French Mission to Poland to help her in her desperate straits; it included Lord D'Abernon and Sir Percy Radcliffe, Director of Military Operations at the War Office, as representing England, and Jusserand and Weygand, Foch's Chief of Staff, as representing France. The Mission left Paris for Warsaw on July 22; it stopped at Prague on the way and saw Masaryk, who said that Czechoslovakia would hold herself strictly neutral as between the Poles and the Bolsheviks; it reached Warsaw on July 25, and found that city in a strange state of excitement and confusion, of hope and despair.

FIRST WITOS CABINET

The quarrels of the politicians had been stopped, at least temporarily, by the constitution of a Government of National Union—"union sacrée"—on the previous day; Witos was Prime Minister and Daszynski Vice-Premier; Sapiiha retained the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ladislas Grabski that of Finance, and Narutowicz that of Public Works; Skulski became Minister of the Interior, and Sosnkowski, Pilsudski's friend, was Minister of War. It was the coalition Government Daszynski had bargained for when the Council for the Defence of the State had been established.

That Council passed a unanimous vote of confidence in Pilsudski—in the absence, however, of Dmowski, who thereafter resigned from it; he thought that while Pilsudski should remain Chief of the State he should cease to be Commander-in-Chief. The untoward course of events on the front had shaken the position of Pilsudski, but he still had considerable prestige, and there was no Polish general of greater merit to put in his place. Joseph Haller, who had achieved a certain amount of popularity, was appointed to the Chief Command on the northern front in place of Szeptycki, and Rozwadowski replaced Stanislas Haller as Chief of the General Staff, but Pilsudski remained Commander-in-Chief, which was well for Poland, as was proved conclusively within the next three weeks. The Marshal invited Weygand to accept the post of adviser to the General Staff, and even asked him to share with himself the responsibilities of the Chief Command, but Weygand declined the latter offer on the ground that he knew neither the Polish troops nor their commanders.

PILSUDSKI'S GREAT PLAN

After Pilsudski's return from the front to Warsaw on August 2 he conferred several times with Weygand and Rozwadowski on the military situation, though he left most of the talking to them; his brain was busying itself on that plan of his own. Weygand's advice was to defend the line of the Vistula while a counter-offensive was being prepared behind the river, in itself a strong natural obstacle to the advance of the enemy; for the southern sector he contemplated the falling back of the Poles to the San, which meant withdrawal from Lwow, and was extremely disliked by Rozwadowski, who was an Eastern Galician Pole. Most of the Polish generals favoured a counter-offensive based on Modlin (Novo Georgievsk), the old fortress lying north-west of Warsaw; they had in their minds the idea that Tukhachevsky would follow the example set in 1831 by Paskevitch, who forced the Vistula below Modlin and took Warsaw from the west—in this case that would mean the

cutting of communications with Danzig, whence supplies from the Allies were to be disembarked.

Lloyd George had promised to send assistance "in the largest measure, especially in war material, consistent with the exhaustion of the Allies and their other heavy engagements." But there were serious obstacles in the way which perhaps he had not foreseen. On July 25 Germany declared her neutrality, and forbade the transport over her territory of every kind of war material to both Poland and Soviet Russia; in the circumstances the prohibition applied in practice to Poland alone. In Czechoslovakia the railwaymen, infected by Bolshevik propaganda, held up the wagons *en route* for Poland. In Danzig the German dockers, partly because of sympathy with the Bolsheviks, and much more because of their hatred of the Poles and resentment on account of the "Corridor," refused to unload the Allied munition-ships—which after a time had to be undertaken by soldiers of the Allies then stationed in the Free City. Munitions sent by France in all haste were prevented from reaching the Polish armies till the decisive battle was fought and won by Pilsudski. Poland was practically left to herself.

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During the night of August 5-6, 1920, the Marshal came to a final decision. Having heard the views of Weygand, Rozwadowski and Sosnkowski, and not liking any of them, he shut himself up in his room in the Belvedere in Warsaw. Perhaps the most moving pages of his *The Year 1920* were those that gave an account of the struggle which he fought with himself during those silent hours while working out his plan of operations—which was to execute a co-ordinated retreat to the Vistula and the Wieprz, a southern affluent; to assemble secretly a strong attacking force, constituted by a regrouping of the armies in the northern and southern sectors, on the Wieprz; and with that strong force to attack with the utmost violence

the left flank and rear of the Bolshevik armies while holding them in front of Warsaw by heavy fighting. The Polish forces in the southern sector were to cover the right flank of the attacking troops, and at the same time to try to hold the line of the Bug to the south of Brest-Litovsk, but without exposing Lwow. As General Camon pointed out in his illuminating book *La Manœuvre libératrice du Maréchal Pilsudski contre les Bolchéviks août 1920*, Pilsudski's plan was a "Napoleonic manœuvre on the enemy's flank and rear." Pilsudski's political and military opponents taunted him with being an amateur, because he had not undergone the customary training of an officer, but he had studied the military art for years in Cracow, and had also trained himself in the field. His military preparation and knowledge were much greater than were generally supposed.

On August 6 an army order, based on Pilsudski's plan, was issued by the General Staff, but it modified to some extent the original conception of the Marshal. The document itself was very long and so detailed in its information that if a copy fell into the hands of Tukhachevsky he would be able to forestall every Polish move; the curious thing was that he did get a copy, but considered it a trap or a "bluff," and disregarded it. As for the Polish General Staff, the changes it made were due to its constant preoccupation with respect to the dreaded turning by Tukhachevsky of the Polish left wing in the north, and by a certain lack of confidence in Pilsudski and his plan. The Marshal was not always well served by his subordinates, whose fears for the safety of Warsaw—fears he did not share, but which he could not wholly set aside as groundless—made it difficult for him to obtain as large a mass of manœuvre as he desired, but the whole Polish front was regrouped in accordance more or less with his ideas; there was a serious check when Pultusk fell to the Bolsheviks on August 8, and this led to the strengthening of the army in the north with other troops, which reduced the numbers available for the great manœuvre.

WARSAW IN DANGER

At this time Warsaw, which had been strongly fortified, was held by some ten divisions, supported by powerful artillery. But within the city were consternation and a profound disquiet; many people of means left for Poznan and other places farther away. The evacuation of Warsaw and the removal of the Government to Poznan or elsewhere were discussed. But it was clear that if the Government abandoned the capital before the military situation made it absolutely necessary, there inevitably would be a worsening of the whole position of the country internally and externally. In the city itself there existed doubtful elements, such as Communists and dissident Jews, who would not lose the opportunity to make all the trouble they could if evacuation took place; in fact, there was a possibility that they might bring off a *coup d'état*, set up a Bolshevist régime, and hand Warsaw to the invaders. The foreign diplomats were uncertain what to do; they badgered Sapieha into telling some of them that Warsaw was as safe as London or Paris; they were informed that the Government proposed to hold the city to the last, and would take steps for ensuring their safety in good time, if the worst was likely. Yet the Government itself, owing to its composition—Grabski and Sapieha, the moderates, against Witos and Daszynski, the “advanced” men—was a little uncertain, but Pilsudski, confident of ultimate victory, held it together. Dmowski had withdrawn to Poznan, and the rumour ran that he, backed by Dowbor-Musnicki, who had contemptuously declined a command offered by the Marshal, was contemplating the formation of a Secessionist Government if Warsaw fell.

Poland was not helped in these days of frightful strain by the advice of the Western Powers, who were intimidated by the repeated threats of their Socialists to resort to “direct action” to prevent assistance to the Poles. On August 6 the British Labour Party published a pamphlet which warned the Governments concerned, their diplomatists and various Foreign Ministers, that the workers of Great Britain would

take no part in the war as allies of Poland. In Paris the French Socialists, through their organ *L'Humanité*, spoke of a "war against the Soviet Republic by the Polish Government on the orders of Anglo-French Imperialism" (*sic*), and cried "Not a man, not a sou, not a shell for reactionary and capitalist Poland! Long live the Russian Revolution! Long live the Workmen's International!" Bolshevik propaganda had done its work in misrepresenting the truth of the Polish-Soviet situation and in misleading the opinion of the masses—and not only of the masses—in the West.

At an interview with Millerand at Hythe Lloyd George maintained that nothing could be done to help Poland. The negotiations for peace between the Bolsheviks and the Poles had not been broken off; they were still suspended, for the reason already stated, namely, the success of the Bolshevik offensive, now reinforced by the near prospect of the fall of Warsaw, for which eventuality Moscow had a ready-made Polish Bolshevik Government on hand. On August 10 Lloyd George delivered a speech in the House of Commons in which he advised Poland to accept the Soviet's terms of peace, which had been communicated to him on the previous day; they were the disarmament of Poland by the reduction of her army to 60,000 men and the establishment of workers' and soldiers' councils in all Polish towns; in addition there was to be a civilian militia of 200,000 men. In his book *The Soviets in World Affairs*, published in 1930, Louis Fischer, an authority on Soviet Russia, said, referring to the Bolshevik terms of peace to Poland: "These terms, according to Lloyd George, changed the situation, and he wired Poland to accept. But Kameneff (the Soviet representative) had wilfully omitted from the document a most important item of the Bolshevik demand: that the civilian militia, numbering perhaps 200,000, would consist only of working men. This was revolutionary propaganda, and not a peace term, for Moscow obviously knew that no bourgeois Government would accept such a proposal. . . . Kameneff wished to prevent British interference." He succeeded. No thanks to Lloyd George that Poland was not Bolshevized!

SOVIET ATTACKS PRESSED

On August 8, 1920, Tukhachevsky issued an order enjoining the 4th Bolshevik Army on his right wing to turn Warsaw from the north, to march westward towards the Lower Vistula and the "Corridor," to outflank the Poles and cut them off from Danzig, while enveloping their left wing. The Polish forces which had retreated to the west side of the Bug on August 2 fell back slowly, according to Pilsudski's instructions, in the direction of Warsaw; twice they stood and fought delaying actions, as he had ordered, to give him the time necessary for the accumulation of his mass of manœuvre on the Wieprz near Deblin (Ivangorod); these actions were depicted by the Reds as heavy defeats for the Poles, but they gave the Marshal ten precious days. On August 13 the Bolsheviks began their attack on the Warsaw bridgehead with two divisions, and breaking into and through the Polish front trenches assaulted and captured Radzymin, a small town about fifteen miles from Warsaw. The Poles withdrew to the second line of defence, but Bolshevik patrols approached to within six miles of Praga, the suburb of Warsaw on the east side of the Vistula. Fierce fighting, with Radzymin, taken and retaken several times, and finally held by the Poles, as the centre of the struggle, continued for three days. Something like panic seized Warsaw. With the exception of Archbishop Ratti, the Papal Nuncio (afterwards Pope Pius XI), Tommasini, the Italian Minister, author of *La Risurrezione della Polonia*, and the American and Danish chargé d'affaires, all the foreign diplomatists, including D'Abernon, left the city on the night of August 13 on hearing of the fall of Radzymin earlier that day.

The Polish General Staff in great alarm telephoned on August 14 to Pilsudski, who was with his mass of manœuvre, to advance the execution of his plan. About the same time Haller ordered Sikorski, in command of the 5th Polish Army, to attack on the Wkra in order to relieve the pressure on the Warsaw bridgehead. On August 15 a Polish division supported by armoured cars retook Radzymin, but failed to hold all of

the place throughout the day; not till the next day did the Poles recover the whole of their first line of defence, and only after bitter fighting.

SIKORSKI'S SUCCESS

Farther north Sikorski, who wrote a full account of what he did at this time in his *Miedzy Wisla a Wkra* (literally, Between the Vistula and the Wkra), attacked the Bolsheviks who had forced the Narew, fought them with varying fortune from August 14 to 16, but threw them back so decisively on August 16 that next day they retreated in disorder—an excellent piece of work, which, however, was given an exaggerated importance by the enemies of Pilsudski with a view to reducing the supreme value of the Marshal's achievements. Cambon described it as "nothing but an *hors d'œuvre* in the manœuvre of Pilsudski, a useful *hors d'œuvre*, since it retarded the retreat of the 4th Soviet Army. But in reality the rôle of the 5th Polish Army should have been restricted to the defence of Modlin, and a part of its troops should have been added to the mass of manœuvre of which the effective was quite insufficient." Not unimportant in itself, Sikorski's success was a good omen, and possessed considerable psychological value. Belief abroad had been almost unanimous that Warsaw would fall; indeed, some Berlin papers announced the capture of the city on August 15!

PILSUDSKI WINS BATTLE OF WARSAW

Pilsudski arrived at Pulawy on August 12 to take command in person of the great manœuvre, the main instrument for it being the 4th Polish Army, with a division of the Legions and some cavalry in addition, which had been assembled in the region of the Wieprz in accordance with his orders. The force was not well-equipped, many of the men were barefoot, and parts of the army had had little rest, but on the night of his arrival he issued a stirring order which concluded by stating that the battle must be won "by the legs and bravery of the Polish

foot-soldier." And so it was! He found his troops in better condition than he expected; to encourage them to the greatest efforts he went up and down their ranks talking to officers and men with quiet confidence, and enduing them with his own indomitable spirit. "Dans cette masse," wrote Cămon, "Piłsudski avait fait passer de son âme." On August 14 came the telephone message from Warsaw begging him to advance the day of attack; he had planned to start it on August 17; he changed the date by a day. On August 15, the fête of the Virgin, the mass of manoeuvre in a special service prayed to God and the Virgin for victory and fatherland. At four o'clock next morning the manoeuvre was launched north-eastward in three swift-marching columns under Skierski, and was successful from the start. Two Bolshevik divisions were surprised, routed, captured or put to flight before nightfall. The left flank of the Bolshevik armies before Warsaw was completely uncovered. Next day the Poles pushed on "like madmen," as Tukhachevsky reported, and got well behind the Bolshevik left wing in front of Warsaw, which immediately began to give way, its retreat being hastened by attacks from the Polish trenches on that side of the city. On that day the Poles reached Biala and Siedlce and were pressing on to Brest-Litovsk; the Bolsheviks broke and sought safety in hurried, disorderly flight to the east; the 3rd Bolshevik Army abandoned the Narew, and the 16th Army retreated in confusion, with heavy losses.

Warsaw was delivered. A miracle had been wrought! The situation was entirely changed, though this was not clearly realized in Warsaw, either by the General Staff or by its citizens; the overthrow of the Bolsheviks, so sudden and sweeping, seemed too good to be true. It certainly was not fully realized either by Tukhachevsky, who still thought the position might be retrieved in the north, or by the Soviet Government. But in the north the 15th Bolshevik Army was already in retreat; only the 4th Army, still marching west to the Lower Vistula, was pursuing its advance—unconscious of what had taken place.

PURSUIT OF THE BOLSHEVIKS

As the great bulk of the Polish forces were in and around Warsaw Pilsudski went there on August 18 to organize the pursuit of the beaten enemy. He found his General Staff considering with trepidation the march of the 4th Bolshevik Army which was nearing Plock on the Vistula—it attacked the place on that very day, and carried it next day, forcing the passage of the Vistula. It had lost touch with Tukhachevsky, but hearing at length of the disasters that had overwhelmed the other Bolshevik armies it began retreating on August 21, and after heavy fighting on the frontier of East Prussia passed over into German territory and laid down its arms. The operations that led to the result interfered with Pilsudski's general plan for the pursuit by drawing to that side of the field the 1st Polish Army, which thereupon co-operated with the 5th Army, thus permitting the 3rd and 15th Bolshevik armies to recover their liberty of movement and retreat towards the east, but they did not do so without losing huge numbers of men and large quantities of material.

On August 25 the pursuit came to an end, and a new front was established by the Poles; by that date the remnants of the Soviet armies were on the far side of the Niemen-Bug line whence the Bolsheviks had set out just a month before confident of victory, and already flushed with triumph. Though there had been no great envelopment of the Bolsheviks—nothing approaching a Sedan—the Poles took 65,000 prisoners, 231 guns, more than a thousand machine guns, 10,000 wagons of munitions and technical material, besides large numbers of armoured cars and motor-lorries. It was estimated that at least 30,000 men were disarmed in East Prussia. Tukhachevsky's total losses during July-August, 1920, were put at 150,000 men, with more than half of his guns and war material gone. The losses of the Poles were relatively very much smaller. In any case, Poland was saved from the Bolsheviks.

COMMENTS ON BATTLE OF WARSAW

No sooner was it won than the Battle of Warsaw, sometimes called the Battle of the Vistula, became the subject of envenomed controversy, as Pilsudski's political opponents maintained that the victory was due to Weygand and not to the Marshal; they said that the conception was Weygand's, the execution at most Pilsudski's. A Russian in the service of Germany as a propagandist gave a different explanation by asserting that the Bolsheviks were beaten by French officers with machine guns. The Poles as a people gladly recognized the value of Weygand's advice, and particularly of the help he gave in organizing the defence of Warsaw; they also admitted that French officers and under-officers assisted them—some to the extent even of fighting beside them in the field—but the number of these Frenchmen was very small, their real significance being far more moral than material. Weygand himself repelled the statement that the victory was his in any way: in an interview which he gave to the correspondent of the *Paris Information*, printed in that journal on August 21, 1920, he said—in reply to the remark that some Poles proclaimed him the "saviour of Warsaw"—"That is not the case, and I beg you to fix French opinion on that important point. The victory which is being celebrated in Warsaw is a Polish victory; the military operations were executed by Polish generals in accordance with a Polish plan." Camon began the Introduction to his *Manœuvre libératrice* with the words "Marshal Pilsudski is incontestably the author of the manœuvre which saved Poland." Some Poles thought that the Marshal's plan owed much to the editing of Rozwadowski; nearer the truth, probably, was the credit given for part of it to trusted officers of the Staff. The fact remained that the victory flowed from Pilsudski's plan; his was the brain that conceived it, and his the arm that carried it into execution.

GREATNESS OF PILSUDSKI'S VICTORY

In the interview mentioned above Weygand observed: "The magnificent Polish victory will have results of great importance on the international situation. It consolidates the Polish State." It did that, but it did a great deal more; it not only saved Poland from Bolshevization, but probably all Europe. In an article published in the *Gazeta Polska*, Warsaw, on August 17, 1930, Lord D'Abernon said:

The history of contemporary civilization knows no event of greater importance than the Battle of Warsaw, 1920, and none of which the significance is less appreciated. The danger menacing Europe at that moment was parried, and the whole episode was forgotten. Had the battle been a Bolshevik victory, it would have been a turning-point in European history, for there is no doubt at all that the whole of Central Europe would at that moment have been opened to the influence of Communist propaganda and to Soviet invasion, which it could with difficulty have resisted. It is evident from speeches made in Russia during the war against Poland that the Soviet plans were very far-reaching. In the more industrialized German towns plans were made on a large scale to proclaim a Soviet régime a few days after Warsaw had fallen. . . . Several times Poland has been the bulwark of Europe against Asiatic invasion, yet never had Poland's services been greater, never had the danger been more imminent. The events of 1920 also deserve attention for another reason: victory was attained above all thanks to the strategical genius of one man and thanks to the carrying through of a manoeuvre so dangerous as to necessitate not only genius, but heroism. . . . It should be the task of political writers to explain to European opinion that Poland saved Europe in 1920, and that it is necessary to keep Poland powerful and in harmonious relations with Western European civilization, for Poland is the barrier to the everlasting peril of an Asiatic invasion.

To this appreciation, which D'Abernon developed in his *Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World*, there might have been added that another consequence of the taking of Warsaw by the Bolsheviks and the Bolshevization of Poland must have been the practical cancellation of the Treaty of Versailles, not by slow stages, but almost at once. The Polish victory could not but be a great relief to the Allies. At the close of a conference held in Lucerne on August 23, 1930, Lloyd George and

Giolitti, Italian Prime Minister, published a *communiqué* which reflected that relief, though its phrasing was certainly inadequate; it expressed profound regret that the Soviet had sought to impose on Poland conditions of peace which were incompatible with the independence of that democratic country; it stated that the Bolsheviks had been punished for their aggression; and it wound up with the hope that the war would now terminate. But the war did not terminate; the Soviet was not convinced that it was beaten, and its terms of peace—negotiations had been resumed at Minsk on August 14—were still those which it had put forward in the second week of August to Lloyd George; therefore Pilsudski had to “mak siccar,” the victory had to be carried farther.

Trotsky in his book ascribed the “extraordinary proportions of the catastrophe before Warsaw” to the conduct of the southern group of the Soviet forces in the direction of Lwow. There was truth in this view, for Yegoroff, their commander, hated Tukhachevsky and would not collaborate with him. Pilsudski was well aware of the risk he ran, and made a certain provision to obviate it, but it was part of his success that the Bolshevik Command in the south made no attempt to interfere with the manœuvre until it was too late. It was not till August 20, when the victorious Poles were in pursuit of the Bolshevik northern armies, that the left wing of the Bolshevik line in the south began an offensive towards Lublin, with Budienny’s horse marching towards Zamosc, which was reached on August 27. The garrison at Zamosc, supported by Ukrainian troops, put up a strong resistance, though almost surrounded; in vain Budienny tried to break it; when engaged in this attempt Polish forces from the 3rd Army attacked him from the north, while from the 6th Army came a sharp assault on him from the south, and he was nearly surrounded in his turn. He broke off the battle, and retreated with all haste towards the east, followed by the Poles, who again attacked him, but he made no stand; the legend of the invincibility of Budienny was destroyed.

POLISH TRIUMPH SOUTH AND NORTH

These operations were a prelude to a general offensive planned by Pilsudski and carried out by Sikorski and other Polish commanders; it began on September 12 in a rapid encircling movement which quickly crushed the 12th and 14th Bolshevik armies, with the capture of Kovel, Luck, Rovno, Tarnopol, the last-named town being occupied on September 18. In the fighting, Polish cavalry proved itself more than a match for Budienny's horse. Pinsk was taken on September 26, and by the middle of October the whole Polish line in the south stood well to the east of the frontier of Eastern Galicia. A more important struggle was proceeding meanwhile in the northern sector, where Tukhachevsky had succeeded in assembling considerable bodies of troops, partly fresh formations, partly remnants of his defeated armies, and partly men who having escaped disaster by crossing into German territory had been permitted by the Germans and Lithuanians to rejoin their fellow-Bolsheviks farther north. This concentration was effected in the region of Grodno and of Bialowieza. To meet it Pilsudski now regrouped the 2nd and 4th Polish armies.

His first task was to reoccupy the region of Suwalki which was held by the Lithuanians. During 1919 and the first half of 1920 the Lithuanians had been neutral in the war between Poland and the Bolsheviks, but after the treaty between Soviet Russia and Lithuania on July 12, 1920, already mentioned, Lithuanian troops took possession of the Suwalki district, though it had been recognized as Polish by the Supreme Council. The Polish Government demanded its return by Lithuania, who refused to comply. But it was occupied by the Poles by the beginning of September without bloodshed; the Lithuanians, however, began an action against the Poles at Seyny, which they took on September 2, and for some time they conducted small operations in collaboration with the Bolsheviks.

BATTLE OF THE NIEMEN

Next followed the Battle of the Niemen, of which little was heard in Western Europe, though in the opinion of some good judges it was more important from both the military and political points of view than the Battle of Warsaw. Still less was heard of the Battle of the Szczara which immediately succeeded that of the Niemen. Faury, the French general who as a lieutenant-colonel was in 1920 attached to the staff of Skierski during Pilsudski's manœuvre, and was subsequently director of the Polish War Academy, always maintained that the two battles together, which completed the defeat of Tukhachevsky, were of greater significance than the Battle of Warsaw. They certainly led to peace between Poland and the Soviet on such terms as she could accept—terms very different from those demanded in August by the Bolsheviks; they also gave in the upshot to Poland a wide stretch of territory in the *Kresy* well to the east of the Curzon line, the Supreme Council being presented with a *fait accompli* which it recognized eventually.

The battles together constituted a knock-out blow to the Bolshevik World Revolution so far as the West was concerned—a fact of literally enormous importance. The victory on the Vistula was not enough in itself for that; it had to be supplemented, and it was, as the interest of Poland demanded, and in this matter Poland represented the interest of the West and of European civilization in general. Not all the Poles approved this fresh offensive, and prominent soldiers, politicians and others advised against it. When leaving Warsaw on August 27 Weygand expressed the hope that the Polish Army would not be drawn too far in pursuit of the enemy, "a thing which might occasion regrettable misunderstandings with the Allies." Pilsudski, however, had made up his mind to try to crush the Bolsheviks and relieve Poland of their menace for years to come. He succeeded, and relieved Europe of it at the same time.

In the second week of September the forces of Tukhachevsky stretched from Grodno to the Pripet marshes; beyond Grodno they were in touch with the Lithuanians. So satisfied

was the Bolshevik commander with the position and its prospects that he was organizing a new offensive movement, but Pilsudski anticipated it. His plan was to turn the Bolshevik front by the north, to march rapidly on Lida and fall on the rear of the enemy while fixing him by a sharp attack on his front near the centre. Action started on the Niemen on September 20; Seyny was taken from the Lithuanians on September 22, and Grodno from the Bolsheviks four days later, after a bitter struggle, as Tukhachevsky attached great importance to holding it. Higher up the Poles forced the Niemen at Druskieniki, cut the Grodno-Vilna railway, and advanced through Radun on Lida, getting behind the right flank of the 3rd Bolshevik Army. Lower down they took, lost and re-took Wolkowysk from the 15th Bolshevik Army, while farther down they pushed the 16th Bolshevik Army towards Baranowicze. To escape complete envelopment the Bolsheviks began retreating on September 25, but their 3rd Army was cut off and practically destroyed by September 28, only small detachments getting away. This brought the Battle of the Niemen to an end; it was a magnificent success gained by hard thinking, hard marching and hard fighting.

BATTLE OF THE SZCZARA

The Battle of the Szczara followed at once. Pilsudski, who conducted the whole of the operations, gave the Bolsheviks no rest—nor, for that matter, did he spare his own men. Part of the 2nd Polish Army at once crossed the Niemen south of Lida, and pushed on through Novogrodek towards the Baranowicze-Minsk railway, driving the 15th Bolshevik Army before it in the direction of Minsk, while the 4th Polish Army cooperated against the Bolsheviks retreating on Minsk and against the 16th Bolshevik Army retiring hotfoot on Slutsk. From Pinsk another Polish force attacked the remnants of the 4th Bolshevik Army. The Bolsheviks offered no serious resistance, and breaking their ranks fled in panic eastward. The Poles pursued, north, centre and south, and gave the enemy no respite.

In the meantime the negotiations for peace had been continued, but on the demand of the Polish Government their *locale* was transferred from Minsk to Riga early in September. On September 14 the Polish Peace Mission left for Riga, and fresh negotiations for an armistice were begun with the Bolsheviks in that city a week later: the Poles were then in the full flood-tide of their success in the Battle of the Niemen, and the Soviet was in a correspondingly chastened mood, which the Battle of the Szczara deepened. In that fortnight's whirlwind campaign the Poles had taken 50,000 prisoners, 160 guns, a thousand machine guns, 18 armoured cars, 7 armoured trains, 3 aeroplanes, 21 locomotives, and 2,500 railway cars and wagons. Two of the Red armies had ceased to exist, and two more had been severely handled. A protocol embodying the preliminaries to a peace was signed on October 12, 1920, and an armistice went into effect at midnight, October 18.

VILNA REOCCUPIED

By that date Pilsudski had realized the programme he had set before himself immediately prior to beginning the offensive on the Niemen. The region through which the railway ran from Luniniec, north of the Pripet and east of Pinsk, to Baranowicze, Lida and Vilna had been occupied, the passages of the Upper Niemen secured, and a corridor established separating Lithuania from Soviet Russia and adjoining Latvia on the north. The result of the September-October operations was the strategic frontier which he desired at that time, and which eventually was recognized as the definitive frontier in that area of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Soviet Russia. His action respecting Vilna was dictated by political as well as military considerations. The dispute over the possession of Vilna which had been going on between the Poles and the Lithuanians was settled in summary fashion by a *fait accompli*; Pilsudski disavowed its paternity at the time, but confessed to it later. Zeligowski, after defeating Lithuanian forces at Jaszuny, entered Vilna on October 9, and also occupied the surrounding

district north and west, the line reached and held being that which, before the Polish retreat in July, had been the line of demarcation between the Polish and the Lithuanian troops. Zeligowski himself was a Lithuanian Pole, like Pilsudski, and the troops he commanded, the 1st Lithuanian-White Russian Division, had come from Lithuania and White Russia. In the occupied territory Zeligowski instituted a little State, "Central Lithuania," with a Government of its own.

Officially the Polish Government repudiated Zeligowski, but its declaration was regarded with a suspicion which was natural in the circumstances. The Vilna controversy might be said to have begun with the occupation of the city in April, 1919, by the Poles, despite the protests of the Lithuanians, and the Allies had laid down a line of demarcation to prevent war, but the Poles had retained the place until it was taken by the Bolsheviks during Tukhachevsky's second offensive in July, 1920, a result of which, as noted above, was its cession to Lithuania on July 12, though the Bolsheviks did not evacuate it till the end of August following, and then the flowing tide was no longer with them, but with the Poles. The League of Nations intervened in the dispute in September, 1920, but without making much progress towards a settlement except by ordering a plebiscite to ascertain the wishes of the population of Vilna and district; under the auspices of the League an armistice was signed on November 29, and a neutral zone was fixed between the forces of "Central Lithuania" and Lithuania. The League had decided, in view of the plebiscite, to send a mixed international force of police to Vilna, but finding this impossible abandoned the idea of a plebiscite, and later had recourse to a special conference of the interested parties in the spring of 1921 that failed to solve the question, which remained a source of bitterness and contention.

In the West the action of Zeligowski was generally reprobated, but the question, like other questions arising out of the Great War, was one of great difficulty; an immense amount of literature of sorts was published by both sides, with no other result than to show that both sides could make out a good case.

But it might in fairness to Poland and Pilsudski be asked what would have been the fate of Lithuania if the Poles had not beaten the Bolsheviks in that autumn campaign when the fate not only of Poland but of Europe was at stake.

RIGA PEACE CONFERENCE

Joffe was the chief representative of the Soviet at the Riga Peace Conference. A clever and practised diplomatist, he had figured first as a member of the Bolshevik Delegation at the Brest-Litovsk Conference, and later had been the representative of the Soviet Government at Berlin—which he had to leave after the Armistice to Germany on November 11, 1918. He had taken a leading part in negotiating and concluding the 1920 treaties of peace with the Baltic States. At Riga he was accompanied by three other Bolshevik delegates, one of whom was a Ukrainian, but their influence on the negotiations was very slight: Joffe, who was in constant touch with Lenin, communicating with him direct, took practically the entire conduct of the Bolshevik case on his own shoulders.

On the Polish side there were eight delegates, six of whom were deputies of the Sejm representing respectively its six most important groups, the seventh delegate was a general, and the eighth was Wasilewski, a former Foreign Minister and an expert on Eastern questions. The leading figure nominally of the Polish Delegation was Dabski, but he was no diplomat and was completely overshadowed by Stanislas Grabski, who knew not only what he wanted to obtain, but had prepared in advance a plan of the Polish-Soviet boundaries, which he induced his colleagues to accept. A Socialist delegate thought that Poland's territorial aspirations were too wide, but he came into line with the others. Another delegate, who had close relations with Pilsudski, maintained that Poland should include White Russia, but as an autonomous State—the federal idea. He was outvoted, the majority of the Polish Delegation adhering to Grabski's proposals. The delegates were in constant telegraphic consultation with the Council for the Defence of the

State and with Sapieha, the Foreign Minister, in Warsaw—they supported Grabski. The negotiations began on November 14, and went on into 1921.

STORMY DEBATES ON POLISH CONSTITUTION

The Sejm had been called into being by Pilsudski to formulate a Constitution, but owing first, to the diversity of the views of the political parties, and secondly, to the war with the Soviet, the subject was not seriously considered by the Sejm till after the Bolshevik invasion had been repelled, and the country was safe. A Constitutional Commission had been appointed early in 1919, and in December, 1919, Professor Dubanowicz, of the University of Lwow, and an ally of the National Democrats, had been elected its chairman; it consisted of eight other deputies chosen from the principal political parties. On July 8, 1920, the Commission put before the Sejm the Constitution it had drawn up, but it was not till September 25 that the real debate started; it did not terminate for several months. The nation was anxious that a Constitution should be voted without unnecessary delay, but party strife was very keen, and sometimes violent, outside as well as inside the Sejm, and progress was slow. On the subject of a Second Chamber—a Senate—there were great differences of opinion, but even greater were those respecting the method to be observed in the elections and the powers to be given to the Chief of the State—the President. The first question—the creation and functions of a Senate—occasioned a stormy controversy, the parties of the Left being strongly opposed to the idea of a bicameral Parliament, as they made very evident in the Sejm on November 5. Articles 35 and 36 of the draft Constitution which dealt with a Senate were sent back to the Constitutional Commission for reconsideration; the Commission redrafted Article 36 and submitted it to the Sejm on November 25—to have it returned by the Sejm on December 10. And so the party warfare went on into 1921.

POLISH-DANZIG CONVENTION

Danzig came into prominence again in the latter half of 1920. Its Constituent Assembly adopted a Constitution on August 11 and submitted it to the League of Nations, which finding it unsatisfactory in several respects returned it for modification; there was begun a controversy which continued for a considerable time. The Constituent Assembly also elaborated a convention with Poland. Both Constitution and Convention had been prescribed in Articles 103 and 104 of the Versailles Treaty; on the strength of Article 102 of the treaty the Allies made a declaration on October 27, 1920, which gave the city of Danzig its *de jure* position as a Free City—not, however, as a Free State, as was sometimes alleged—on November 15, the Allies having transferred their rights under the Versailles Treaty to the League. The Polish-Danzig Convention was signed at Paris on November 9; it had been drafted by a Commission consisting of English, French, Italian and Japanese representatives; it was accepted by the Ambassadors' Conference on October 19; Paderewski signed it for Poland and Sahn, the burgomaster of Danzig, for the Free City, and it came into force on November 15. The Convention put several glosses on the terms of the Versailles Treaty, and they were not favourable to Poland; the principal change was the creation of a Harbour Board (of which there was no mention in the treaty) consisting of five Poles and five Danzigers, with a president of Swiss nationality appointed by the League; in the event of a tie between the delegates the president had the casting vote. According to the clear meaning of paragraph 2 of Article 104 of the treaty Poland was to have the exclusive administration of the port; the Convention not only deprived Poland of that exclusive administration, but also of the control of the Vistula within the territory of Danzig, to which Poland was entitled by paragraph 3 of the same Article. The port of Danzig virtually became the property of the Harbour Board, whose mixed character could not but give the certainty of quarrels, which the president might not be able to compose.

POLISH ECONOMIC SITUATION BAD

From the economic point of view 1920 was a bad year for Poland. The war with Soviet Russia, though it was brought to a successful issue, led to the devastation of extensive tracts of the country, and in large measure rendered of little avail the great efforts of the Government and people for the reorganization of industry and agriculture. On the one hand, workers and peasants left the factories and the fields for the front; on the other, refugees swarmed into Warsaw and Western Poland, bringing with them pestilence and disease in epidemic form. The Budget deficiency of about 7,000 million Polish marks in 1919 was more than seven times as much in 1920. The international valuta or exchange continued to fall; the mark constantly depreciated; in January 1920 the dollar (American) was worth 120 marks, whereas in part of the preceding year it had been worth no more than 12 marks; by the end of 1920 it took 500 marks to buy a dollar. And as the mark tumbled, the cost of living increased. Although dearly bought, the great positive gain made by Poland in 1920 was the early and assured fixation of her eastern frontier by treaty with the Soviet Government; with the exception of Upper Silesia, her whole territory had obtained practically its boundaries—as the near future showed; once these were settled, she was in a position to devote herself to the solution of her political, economic and other pressing internal problems. The federalism sponsored by Pilsudski had been scotched, if not killed. After the Polish-Soviet armistice the Ukrainian forces still in the field were shattered by the Bolshevik troops, and retreated within the Polish lines; similarly the White Russians, who, under Balachowicz, had supported the Poles in the north, and went on fighting for an independent White Russia after the armistice, were beaten and found a refuge in Poland. As for Pilsudski himself, his prestige, which had been dimmed by the success of the Bolshevik invasion, had been restored by his great victories, and he was still the dominant figure in Poland.

CHAPTER V

NATIONAL CONSOLIDATION

1921

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ALTHOUGH the passing of the Constitution by the Sejm was the most important event in the domestic politics of Poland in 1921, other events that occurred in that year were also of primary significance as strengthening her national consolidation both externally and internally. Among these was the signing of three treaties—with France, Rumania and Soviet Russia respectively. The first and second of these were deeply concerned with, and were symptomatic of her policy *vis-à-vis* the troubled and confused situation then existing in Europe; the third settled her eastern frontier, and definitely gave her part of the *Kresy*. Another event of simply enormous importance to her was the solution of the Upper Silesia question by which she obtained a most valuable portion of that province.

Developments also took place in connexion with Eastern Galicia, Lithuania and Danzig; if a final settlement of these problems was not achieved in 1921, the stage reached was on the whole not unfavourable to Poland. Internationally she occupied a much better and stronger position in 1921 than in 1920. Her treaties with France and Rumania, synchronizing as they practically did with the rise of the Little Entente, the defensive alliance of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania also oriented to France, were of the greatest consequence not only to herself, but also for the pacification and stabilizing of Europe in accordance with the Peace Treaties. Of these Polish treaties that with France came first in time.

It was in the nature of things for the new Poland to orient herself to France. The historical, traditional friendship with France, the memories of the time last century when Paris gave hospitable refuge to Polish *émigrés* after the failure of insur-

rections, the links between French and Polish noble families through marriage, the lure of Paris, the second home of so many Poles—all told for France with Poland. And if it was true that after the making of the Franco-Russian Alliance France lost all interest in Poland, it was also true that with the collapse of Tsarist Russia the situation entirely changed for both France and Poland; the Russian alliance was dead, and something else must be put by France in its place. In any case it was France who assisted Poland most in the Peace Conference and afterwards; it was France who was helping the reorganization of the Polish Army—it had grown to a million men in the beginning of 1921—by Military Missions and by sending all manner of war supplies; it was France who was coming forward with loans and making investments in the oil, mining and other Polish industries. But, most of all, and this was fundamental, it was France who stood forth as the champion of the Peace Treaties and the resettlement of Europe effected by them as against German or other demands for revision. It was no wonder that Poland should ally herself with France. For her part France saw in Poland, a strong Poland, an indispensable condition of the stability and equilibrium of Europe and of her own security.

FRANCO-POLISH ALLIANCE

Early in January, 1921, the French Government invited Poland to send representatives to Paris for an exchange of views on important subjects of common interest, and to facilitate the "conclusion of a political and economic entente between Poland and France." The Polish Government accepted the invitation, and intimated that Pilsudski as Chief of the State would visit the French capital in person, the date being fixed for January 12. But the Marshal, who had undergone a severe strain during the preceding year, fell ill, and the journey had to be postponed; on his recovery Briand telegraphed to him a very friendly message in anticipation of his coming to Paris; in reply he expressed his joy at the prospect of standing soon on French soil to greet the leaders of France and to see the

"glorious battlefields where the Polish banner fluttered" among the French flags. "I am convinced," he said, "that my visit to Paris and the resulting meeting of the representatives of the two Governments will not fail to strengthen the enduring bonds which unite France and Poland and secure the happiness and prosperity of the two nations." Pilsudski arrived in Paris on February 3, 1921, accompanied by Sapieha, the Foreign Minister, and Sosnkowski, Minister of War, and he was welcomed by Briand, Barthou and Weygand. After exchanging calls with President Millerand, he deposited a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Negotiations between the French and Polish Ministers proceeded briskly, and on February 6 Briand communicated to the British, Italian and Japanese Ambassadors at the Quai d'Orsay the terms of a joint Franco-Polish declaration: "The Governments of France and Poland, being equally anxious to safeguard their security and the peace of Europe, have recognized once more the community of interests which unite the two countries in friendship, and have agreed to confirm their decision to co-ordinate their efforts and to this end to maintain close contact for the defence of these interests." On the same day Pilsudski paid a visit to Verdun, where he was received by Pétain, who showed him over that ever-famous battleground; Verdun conferred on him the freedom of the city; in return he decorated Verdun with the Polish *croix de guerre*. Thereafter the Marshal went back to Warsaw. The Poles were gratified by the undoubted success of his visit, which, incidentally, enhanced his own position and prestige both at home and abroad. In a dispatch dated February 7 the Paris correspondent of *The Times* commenting on the visit said: "Both in Polish and French circles here great regret is expressed that the British Government gave no encouragement to the idea that the Marshal's journey should be extended to England. It is an open secret that such was Pilsudski's wish. Franco-Polish intimacy makes it clearer than ever that our political insularity is obsolete."

The Political Agreement resulting from the visit was signed

by Briand and Sapieha at Paris on February 19, 1921. Its Preamble and First Clause ran :

The Polish Government and the French Government, being equally anxious to safeguard, by the maintenance of the Treaties which have been signed in common, or which may eventually be recognized, the state of peace in Europe, and the security and defence of their territory, as well as their mutual political and economic interests, have agreed :

(1) In order to co-ordinate their endeavours towards peace the two Governments undertake to consult each other on all questions of foreign policy which concern both States, so far as these questions affect the settlement of international relations, in the spirit of the Treaties and in accordance with the Covenant of the League of Nations.

The Second Clause dealt with economic restoration and the development of the economic relations of the two States through special agreements and a Commercial Treaty. Clauses Three and Four stated :

(3) If, notwithstanding the sincerely pacific views and intentions of the two contracting States, either or both of them should be attacked without giving provocation, the two Governments shall take concerted measures for the defence of their territory and the protection of their legitimate interests, within the limits specified in the Preamble.

(4) The two Governments undertake to consult each other before concluding new Agreements affecting their policy in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Fifth and last clause prescribed that the Agreement was not to come into force until the commercial agreements then being negotiated had been signed. Ratifications were exchanged at Paris on June 27, 1922, and by that time conventions between the two States had been concluded respecting military co-operation, the oil industry and other matters. The Political Agreement was registered with the League of Nations on July 2, 1923.

POLISH ALLIANCE WITH RUMANIA

Poland's treaty with Rumania was signed at Bucarest on March 3, 1921, by Sapieha and Take Jonsescu. The Rumanian statesman, one of the founders of the Little Entente, was most

desirous that that political combination should be extended to include Poland and Greece, and he did his utmost to bring this about, but without success, because of the opposition existing between the Poles and the Czechoslovaks, and the fact that Greece had not settled with Turkey. But when he signed the treaty with Sapieha and till his death on June 21, 1922, he still cherished this idea. He had visited Warsaw in the autumn of 1920, and had advocated an entente between Poland and Czechoslovakia, but the time was not propitious. Nothing, however, stood in the way of a very complete entente between Poland and Rumania; they had no quarrel, no dispute over frontiers; they had a compelling common ground for co-operation in Soviet Russia, Rumania like Poland being a "Barrier" State. Rumanian troops had taken joint action with Polish forces in the Ukrainian campaign in 1919; one of the reasons for the swiftness of Tukhachevsky's push for Warsaw had been the determination to forestall and frustrate possible help to the Poles by Rumania. The treaty between Poland and Rumania was in the logic of things; it was entitled a "Convention for a Defensive Alliance," and consisted of eight articles, the first four being:

(1) Poland and Rumania undertake to assist each other in the event of their being the object of an unprovoked attack on their present eastern frontiers. Accordingly, if either State is the object of an unprovoked attack, the other shall consider itself in a state of war and shall render armed assistance.

(2) In order to co-ordinate their efforts to maintain peace both Governments undertake to consult together on such questions of foreign policy as concern their relations with their eastern neighbours.

(3) A military convention shall determine the manner in which either country shall render assistance to the other should the occasion arise. This convention shall be subject to the same conditions as the present convention as regards duration and denunciation.

(4) If, in spite of their efforts to maintain peace, the two States are compelled to enter on a defensive war under the terms of Article 1, each undertakes not to negotiate or conclude an armistice or a peace without the participation of the other State.

The Fifth Article validated the treaty for five years, with liberty to either State to denounce it after two years on giving the

other State six months' notice. By the Sixth Article neither State could conclude an alliance with a third State without having first procured the assent of the other State—alliances, however, were excepted which had in view the maintenance of treaties already signed jointly by Poland and Rumania, but these had to be notified. Then the Polish Government declared that it knew of the agreements entered into by Rumania with other States for upholding the Treaties of Trianon and Neuilly, and the Rumanian Government declared similarly that it knew of the agreements entered into by Poland and France. The Seventh Article provided for the communication of the treaty to the League of Nations in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, and the Eighth for its ratification at Bucarest. Ratifications were exchanged in the Rumanian capital on July 25, 1921, and the treaty was registered with the League on October 24, 1921. The treaty bore a strong family likeness to the Defensive Conventions of the Little Entente; indeed, Jonescu a few weeks after the conclusion of the Polish-Rumanian treaty signed a Convention of Defensive Alliance with Czechoslovakia which, *mutatis mutandis*, closely resembled the other.

In the course of an interview on the Czechoslovak-Rumanian treaty Jonescu again referred to his favourite scheme for the extension of the Little Entente. "My own desire," he said, "would be to discover a formula which would cover the indirect as well as the general interests of the peoples victorious in the World War. The Little Entente would then become the basis of an alliance of all the victors in Central and Eastern Europe for the maintenance of all the Peace Treaties against all assaults. It is my hope that what we have now done will develop in that sense in the future." It was not an unreasonable hope, but its realization seemed remote, though not perhaps so entirely problematical, at least in substance, as it appeared to most people at the time. The necessity remained for defending the Peace Treaties and the New Europe they created or registered against all assaults—a necessity that was likely to grow more urgent rather than less as time went on and Germany recovered something of her former great position in Europe and the world.

TREATY OF RIGA SIGNED

Meanwhile the negotiations between the Polish and Bolshevik plenipotentiaries for peace had been proceeding at Riga; they were concluded on March 18, 1921, by the signing of a treaty, the main feature of which was the tracing of the Polish-Soviet frontier. When the boundary proposed by the Polish Delegation was submitted to Joffe and his colleagues, it was accepted by them respecting the line of the boundary south of Polesia, but farther north the Bolsheviks wished to have the frontier drawn as far to the west of Minsk as possible, and they opposed to the last moment the inclusion in Poland of the territory north of Vilna. The Poles, for their part, were determined that there should not be a common frontier between Soviet Russia and Lithuania, and as the situation on the front was hopeless for the Soviet it had to agree to this condition. But the Poles showed little or nothing of the Imperialism with which they had been accused, for their claim to territorial acquisition was studiously moderate, despite their great victories. They were firm regarding Eastern Galicia; when Joffe, at the request of the Soviet Republic of the Ukraine, asked for a plebiscite in that district, they refused, and the matter dropped. The frontier agreed on was well within that of 1772, and was even farther west than that Dmowski had demanded at the Paris Conference, but it ran considerably to the east of the Curzon line, and included in Poland about 110,000 square kilometres of the *Kresy*.

In the treaty Poland and Soviet Russia recognized the independence of each other, and abandoned all claims to territories situated on either side of the new frontier. Poland recognized the independence of the White Russian and Ukrainian Soviet Republics; on the other hand, the Soviet declared itself disinterested respecting the Polish-Lithuanian dispute over Vilna—Poland and Lithuania were to settle the controversy themselves. Poland and Soviet Russia mutually agreed to recognize the political sovereignty of the other, and not to mix in each other's internal affairs; to refrain from propaganda and from

harbouring organizations hostile to the other contracting party. They renounced claims for war reparations, but the Soviet undertook to restore all art collections, libraries and historical and other documents that had been removed to Russia after 1772, as well as all industrial plant, implements and so forth that had been carried off between August 1, 1914, and October 1, 1915; also to pay to Poland thirty million gold roubles as her quota of the assets of the former Russian Empire, for the Debts of which she was to be held irresponsible. The Soviet accorded the most-favoured-nation treatment to Poland, and both States agreed on free transit, reciprocally, across their respective territories, except for munitions of war; Poland, however, reserved the right to regulate the transit of goods of German or Austrian origin.

THE "KRESY"

Considered as an act of restitution on the part of Russia, for such it was, only one-third of the region lying west of the frontier of 1772 was returned to Poland by the Riga Treaty. It was always impossible that there could strictly be anything of a genuine ethnographic boundary between Poland and Russia, for between the ethnographic Poland and the ethnographic Russia lay that broad band of land nearly wholly agricultural and mostly occupied by peasants of mixed nationality which the Poles designated the *Kresy*. According to the Polish census of 1921 there were in the part of it returned to Poland—Vilna, Novogrodek, Bialystok, Polesia and Volhynia—45·8 per cent. Poles; 22·7 per cent. White Russians; 17·3 per cent. Ukrainians; 9·7 per cent. Jews, the remainder being Lithuanians, Russians and others. The Russian *émigrés* in Paris protested against the Riga frontier, as was perhaps natural, but they had little real cause for complaint. The census figures showed that though the Poles had not an absolute majority in their area they had a high relative majority: 45·8 per cent. of the total population, which was put at 5,424,437.

The treaty clarified the position respecting Eastern Galicia

for Poland, the Soviet and the Soviet Ukrainian Republic. In December, 1919, the Supreme Council had withdrawn the resolution giving Poland a mandate to organize and govern Eastern Galicia for 25 years, as the Poles declined to accept it; the Council had thereupon gone back to its earlier decision, which in effect was to hand the district to Poland, who was to give it autonomy. In February, 1921, the subject was brought before the Council of the League of Nations by some members of what had been the "Rada of the Western Ukraine" (Eastern Galicia) who had taken up their abode in Vienna; later their headquarters were to be transferred to Berlin, a more promising propagandist centre. On the motion of Hymans, the Belgian representative, the Council referred the whole matter to the Ambassadors' Conference for consideration. Poland registered the Riga Treaty with the League on August 12, 1921. But nearly two years had to elapse before the treaty-frontier was recognized by the Great Allies and the question of Eastern Galicia settled at the same time by the attribution of the district to Poland on an autonomy basis. So far as the treaty was concerned the Vilna question was placed outside the orbit of the Soviet. The situation at the moment was that Vilna and the Vilna district, under the name of Central or Middle Lithuania, was held by Zeligowski with his "Lithuanian-White Russian troops," without any recognized connexion with the Polish Government.

The net outcome of the Polish-Soviet War was that Pilsudski had succeeded only in part in carrying out his grand ideas: he had succeeded in interposing between the essential or ethnographic Poland and the Soviet a considerable block of territory, which, in view of the attitude of the Supreme Council, Poland would probably not have obtained otherwise; but he had failed to make federalism good. To express Pilsudski's success in another way: the Soviet had done its utmost by military action, to say nothing of propaganda, to make Poland Bolshevick, but thanks chiefly to the Marshal it failed. Trotsky, in his book already quoted, said: "The Poland of Pilsudski came out of the war unexpectedly strengthened. . . . The development of

the Polish revolution (a supposed Bolshevik internal revolution in Poland) received a crushing blow. The frontier established by the Riga Treaty cut off the Soviet from Germany, a fact that was later of great importance in the lives of both countries." An illuminating statement!

POLISH CONSTITUTION PASSED

On March 17, 1921—the day before that on which the Riga Treaty was concluded—the Sejm passed the Constitution *en bloc* by a large majority, the minority being composed of the Socialists and the *Wyzwolenie* Populists. The struggle over providing a Senate which had gone on for some time was finally closed on January 27, 1921, when the Sejm decided to adopt the bicameral system. This was a victory for the Right, as was also the part of the Constitution dealing with the election, functions and so on of the President. The action of the Right was inspired by animosity to Pilsudski; it believed that he would be elected President, and it was determined that if it could not prevent his election, it would limit his power as much as possible; it therefore accepted the most radical proposals to gain its object. As things were, Pilsudski was not only Chief of the State but also Commander-in-Chief; the Constitution made the President Commander-in-Chief during peace alone, as he was definitely forbidden by it to exercise the Supreme Command in time of war.

In sum, the Right succeeded in weakening the Executive by strengthening the Legislative, whereas the Left was in favour of precisely the opposite—a curious reversal of the usual rôles played by these two camps of political thought; the Right was more democratic than the Left! The simple explanation was, of course, the Right's hostility to Pilsudski. Professor Dubanowicz, the *rapporteur* in the Sejm on the Constitution, stated in his book *Rewizja Konstytucji* (Revision of the Constitution): "The fear of an abuse of power by a man whose moderation and respect for law were suspect outweighed the idea, good in normal circumstances, that the President of the Republic

ought to have the right of veto and of dissolving Parliament." The *man* indicated was Pilsudski. Dubanowicz, who belonged to the Skulski group of the Right, was in close contact with the National Democrats, and in framing the Constitution he was largely influenced by Lutoslawski, a Dominican priest and a National Democrat of great ability. The Right triumphed, but usually by narrow majorities in the Sejm.

Compared with the famous Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791, which was far in advance of its time, the Constitution of March 17, 1921, like most other European Constitutions of recent date, showed the enormous progress towards democracy that was characteristic of political opinion in general, especially after the War. Dubanowicz and Lutoslawski, however, took as a model the French Constitution of 1875, and traces of that Constitution appeared in that of March 17 in the bicameral system, in the procedure concerning the election of the President, and in other respects. Other Constitutions were laid under contribution by the Sejm, though there was little or no direct copying of any of them. Echoes of the German Constitution were to be heard in the Polish Constitution's formulation of the principles of the Parliamentary régime, and in its ideology in dealing with the rights and duties of citizens. The Czechoslovak Constitution perhaps suggested some of the features incorporated in the Polish Constitution's prescriptions touching the functions and organization of the Senate.

The "Little Constitution" had been based on the most democratic franchise—"universal, direct, equal, secret and proportional." It was the same with the new Constitution so far as the Sejm was concerned, but for the Senate the voting age was made 30, instead of 21 for the Sejm, and a candidate for the Senate had to be 40, instead of 25 for the Sejm. But in point of fact these differences might be considered negligible, as the place assigned to the Senate in the general scheme was so insignificant that the only House which really counted in Poland was the Sejm. The Senate was virtually an honorific body. One other consideration had weight in determining part of the Constitution—that treating of property—namely, the

proximity of the Communism of the Soviet. The Constitution thus combined distinctively Polish elements with elements borrowed from Western Europe.

TEXT OF THE CONSTITUTION

No Polish Constitution could begin without referring to the liberation of the country so recently achieved. The Preamble to that of March 17, 1921, read:

In the Name of Almighty God, We, the Polish Nation, grateful to Providence for having delivered us from slavery lasting a century and a half; remembering with gratitude the heroism and prowess shown by successive generations in their struggles, sacrifices and unsparing devotion and efforts in the cause of Independence; mindful of the great traditions of the glorious Constitution of the Third of May (1791); aiming at the welfare of our Motherland, united and independent, desirous of affirming its existence, security and power, and of establishing a social order based on the eternal principles of right and freedom; wishing to assure the development of all its forces, moral and material, for the supreme benefit of reviving humanity and of securing for all citizens of the Republic equality, respect for labour, recognition of all their rights, as well as individual protection by the State, enact and confirm this Constitution in the Constituent Assembly of the Polish Republic.

The text of the Constitution was divided into six chapters: 1, The Republic; 2, The Legislative Power; 3, The Executive Power; 4, The Judicial Power; 5, The General Rights and Duties of Citizens; and 6, General Provisions. The First Article was "The Polish State is a Republic," and the Second "The sovereign power in the Polish Republic vests in the nation. The organs of the nation are the Sejm and the Senate in legislative matters; the President of the Republic, acting conjointly with responsible Ministers, as regards the exercise of the executive power; and the independent Tribunals of Justice in judicial affairs." The Legislative came first and foremost; next was the Executive; and last was the Judiciary. The sovereign power vested in the nation was to be expressed by Parliament—the Sejm and the Senate, but the Senate had no initiative, and if the Sejm dissolved itself, as it could, the Senate auto-

matically ceased to exist. The President of the Sejm, known as its Marshal (Speaker) in accordance with Polish tradition, continued in office after the dissolution of Parliament till the election of the same or another man as Marshal by a new Sejm. In the event of the President of the Republic not being able for any reason to function, it was the Marshal of the Sejm who took his place, not the Marshal of the Senate. All that was given to the Senate was a very restricted right of suspensive veto, which the Sejm could overcome by an eleven-twentieths vote in ordinary session; if that happened, the President of the Republic had to promulgate its decision as law at once. The enfeeblement of the Senate was the result of a compromise between the Right and the Left, particularly the Socialists.

THE PRESIDENT

By the Constitution the President of the Republic was the head of the Executive; he was to hold office for seven years after his election by the Sejm and the Senate united in a National Assembly—on the French model, and, as in the French Constitution, all the Acts of the President had to be countersigned by Ministers of the Government, who were responsible for them. The President had no power to dissolve the Sejm without the assent of three-fifths of the total statutory number of senators in the presence of at least one-half of the total statutory number of deputies (of the Sejm). He had no right to initiate legislation or of veto, as already indicated. He nominated the Government—the President of the Council of Ministers (Prime Minister) and the other Ministers; the Constitution did not prescribe a particular method in this matter, but left it to the discretion of the President; on the other hand, it was expressly provided that the Government was responsible to the Sejm and had to resign if the Sejm demanded it to do so. When the Government had been nominated by the President it had to appear before the Sejm and submit its policy for the Sejm's approval or the reverse; the Sejm could thereupon dismiss the Government or demand the resignation of any of

the Ministers. It was an ultra-Parliamentary régime that the Constitution established. It sounded well, and certainly was in accord with current political ideas, but it gave no heed to the patent fact that owing to the multiplicity of parties and groups the Sejm was not in a position to provide a strong Parliamentary Government based on an adequate majority.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Respecting local government the Constitution in its Third Article said: "The Polish Republic, having its foundation based on the principle of wide local autonomy, transfers to the organs of the said autonomy the power of legislation, particularly in administrative, social and economic affairs." Article 65 divided the country into counties (*województwa*), districts (*starostwa*) and urban or rural communities as the units of local autonomy, which might form federations for specific objects. Article 67 stated that the right to decide on questions connected with local government appertained to councils elected by these units. By a law passed on July 15, 1920, Upper Silesia had been given autonomy and a local legislature; this was, of course, a special case, but it afforded an example of what the Constitution had in view. Apart from territorial autonomy, Article 68 provided for the establishment of an economic autonomy of chambers of agriculture, commerce, industry, craftsmanship, salaried labour and others, forming jointly the Supreme Economic Chamber of the Republic.

THE JUDICATURE

According to the Constitution the judiciary enjoyed an autonomous and independent status, which was guarded by various provisions prohibiting the dismissal or transfer of judges, and making them responsible only to statutory enactments. Article 81 stated, however, that "the Courts of Justice shall not have the right to challenge the validity of Statutes legally promulgated"—which meant the supremacy of the Sejm over the

judicial departments of the Government. As against that, judicial decisions could not be changed by the Sejm or by the Executive. The President appointed the judges, except where the law provided otherwise. In the administration of justice, as in other matters, Poland was conditioned by her past; in 1921 and afterwards the separate legal systems in force during the partitions still prevailed; there was a certain similarity between the systems of former German and Austrian Poland, but little between them and that of former Russian Poland.

In 1919 the Sejm had set up a Codification Commission to draft uniform rules for the organization of justice, under the chairmanship of Professor Fierich of Cracow University, a distinguished juristic authority. The Commission comprised two divisions, one dealing with Civil Law and the other with Penal Law, but the work was difficult and necessarily took a long time, especially as the Commission set before itself the task not only of unifying Polish law, but also of finding a synthesis between the right of free citizenship as posed by the French Revolution and the extreme Socialization posed by the legislation of some post-War States. The Commission was considered as an auxiliary of Parliament, and had to present to it through the Minister of Justice the laws that had been drafted. The first of these drafts was presented to the Sejm early in 1921.

Chapter V of the Constitution dealt with the rights and duties of Polish citizens. Full protection of life, freedom and property was guaranteed in Poland to all her inhabitants, without distinction of origin, nationality, language, race or religion; aliens, on condition of reciprocity, had the same rights as Poles and the same duties, except where the law required Polish nationality. No privileges of birth, class, heraldry and aristocratic or other titles, except scientific distinctions and official and professional titles, were to be recognized. Freedom of religion, conscience, of the Press, of petition and of association were guaranteed. Article 109 provided that every citizen had the right to retain his nationality, and to cultivate his language and national customs. Special legislation was to safeguard for minorities the full and unrestricted development of their

national life through autonomous, legally recognized public institutions within the general unions of local government.

NATIONAL MINORITIES

By Article 110 Polish subjects belonging to national minorities, or to those of religion or language, had equally with other citizens the right to form, control and administer, at their own expense, charitable institutions of a religious or social character, as well as to use their language freely, and to observe the precepts of their religion. These and other clauses of the Constitution implemented the Treaty entered into by Poland with the Allies on June 28, 1919, respecting her national minorities. The Constitution also provided for the protection of labour, "the principal source of wealth in the Republic," and for the protection of maternity and children. It made primary education compulsory, education in State or local government schools being free to all; in State-supported schools religious instruction was compulsory for all under 18 years of age, the conduct and control of this teaching resting with the respective religious bodies, under the supreme control of the educational authorities of the State. By Article 114 it was declared: "The Roman Catholic confession, being the confession of the majority of the people, has a preponderating authority in the State among other religions which enjoy equal treatment. The Roman Catholic Church is governed by its own laws. The relation between the Church and the State shall be determined on the basis of a concordat with the Holy See, to be ratified by the Sejm." Four years passed, however, before a concordat was signed.

Property was the subject of Article 99. It was of particular interest because of its bearing on Communism and agrarian reform. It stated:

The Polish Republic recognizes all property, whether belonging to individuals or collectively to associations, autonomous bodies, institutions or the State itself, as one of the principal foundations of social organization and legal order; it grants to all inhabitants, institutions

and communities the protection of their property, and does not admit any limitation or abolition of individual or collective property, except as provided by Statute for the common benefit and with compensation.

Law alone may decide what, and within what limits, property may be subject to the exclusive ownership of the State for reasons of public utility, and also how far the rights of the citizens and their legally recognized organizations to exploit land, water, minerals and other natural wealth, may be limited.

Being one of the principal factors of the national life and of the State itself, land may not be the object of unrestricted transfer. The law shall fix the limits within which the State shall have the right to compulsory redemption of property in land as well as the regulations concerning the transfer of such property in accordance with the principle that the agrarian organization of the State shall be based on agricultural cultivation fit for normal production and owned by individuals.

The last chapter of the Constitution provided that its revision could take place only after a vote to that effect in the presence of at least one-half of the total number of the members of the National Assembly, and carried by a majority of two-thirds. The motion for revision had to be signed by one-quarter of the total number of deputies, and was to be announced at least fifteen days in advance. However, the second Sejm, elected on the basis of the Constitution—the first fully representative Sejm—could exceptionally proceed to revise the Constitution if revision was demanded by a three-fifths vote of at least one-half of the total number of deputies. In any case, a final clause provided for revision every twenty-five years by the Sejm and the Senate sitting conjointly as the National Assembly.

CHARACTER OF THE CONSTITUTION

Taken as a whole, the Polish Constitution was "one of the most democratic Constitutions in the world," as it was justly characterized by the Socialist deputy Niedzialkowski when finally announcing that his party would not vote for it because of the adoption of the bicameral system, and the rejection of the referendum, the legal right to strike and so forth. He added, however: "We consider it our duty to state that in voting this

Constitution Poland places herself on a footing with modern democracies and accords a series of franchises for which the proletariat of other countries had to fight for long years. This progress authorizes us (Socialists) to salute the Constitution as a great step forward." After the vote had been taken and the Constitution passed, a procession of deputies went to the Cathedral, where Trampczynski, the Marshal of the Sejm, laid a wreath on the tomb of Malachowski, the Marshal of the Parliament of 1791 which voted the Third of May Constitution. Thereafter the deputies returned and resumed their work in the Sejm. The Constitution was promulgated on June 1, 1921, but the "Little Constitution" remained in force pending the passing of an electoral law, about which the Sejm could not be accused of taking precipitate action, for more than a year elapsed before it was put on the statute book. The Sejm was in no hurry to dissolve itself, and the manœuvrings and conflicts of the various parties and groups composing it went on as before.

Witos was still Prime Minister, but the Government was no longer one of *union sacrée*, and several important changes had taken place in its composition. During November, 1920, the National Democrats went into opposition, and ordered Grabski, as one of their party, to withdraw from the Cabinet. He was succeeded as Minister of Finance by Steczkowski, who, in April, 1918, had been Prime Minister under the Regency Council. He now applied himself to find some remedy for the increasingly bad situation of the country with respect to its finances as inflation proceeded without check, Government deficits being covered by fresh issues of Polish marks from the printing press. He had sound ideas on reducing expenditure and balancing the Budget, but the great evils of inflation were not generally recognized at the time any more in Poland than elsewhere, while there was the evident fact, on the other side of the account, that inflation did provide money for new factories and other industrial enterprises as if by some sort of magic—"bad magic," as it turned out to be in the end. The next secession from the Witos Government was that of Daszyn-

ski, who withdrew in December, 1920, on the plea that the particular object—peace with the Soviet—for which the coalition Cabinet had come into existence had been attained; he took his party with him.

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Witos continued in office in 1921, and the conclusion of the French, Rumanian and Soviet Treaties helped him to do so, but in April, 1921, interest in Poland tended more and more to concentrate itself on the question of Upper Silesia, about which there were great searchings of heart. Some Poles hoped much from the support of France, though others grumbled that her support had been or was being rather dearly bought by too-favourable commercial concessions in the conventions that were in process of negotiation. Some Poles, again, regarded with apprehension the probable attitude of England, as incarnated for the moment in Lloyd George; they looked on him, so far as Upper Silesia was concerned, as definitely pro-German, or at least anti-Polish. On December 27, 1920, the Ambassadors' Conference had decided that, to reduce the chances of disorder during the taking of the plebiscite, out-voters—non-residents—should vote a fortnight later than the resident voters. But this decision was cancelled by the Supreme Council in February, 1921, which ordered that the vote of residents and non-residents should be taken on one and the same day, the change having been brought about, it was believed by the Poles, by England and Italy as against France. There was great dismay in Poland, and the papers of the Left went so far as to demand the resignation of Sapiiha, the Foreign Minister. Feeling ran high in Warsaw and throughout the country; there was great excitement also in Germany.

UPPER SILESIA QUESTION

Nearly two years had passed since the signature of the Treaty of Versailles when the plebiscite was taken in Upper Silesia on

March 30, 1921. According to the German Upper Silesia census of 1910 the population of the district consisted of 1,245,000 Poles and 672,000 Germans. During the two years' interval between the treaty and the voting the Germans worked hard to strengthen their position, and the Poles, under the leadership of Korfanty, had been active in their opposition, which included two risings, one in August, 1919, and the other in August, 1920, neither of which had much success, except in making Korfanty the outstanding figure among the Poles in Upper Silesia. An Inter-Allied Commission was sent to maintain order and prepare for the voting, but no disturbances marked the actual holding of the plebiscite. Korfanty had been appointed by the Polish Government president of the Polish Plebiscitary Committee, and he enjoined calm on his fellow-countrymen. The result of the voting was 707,605 for Germany and 479,359 for Poland, according to the final figures issued on April 23; it was admitted, however, that the German count included upwards of 100,000 out-voters; these had been brought by special trains from the interior of Germany, and were sent back again—"returned empties"—as soon as they had voted, nor had they any intention of returning ever again to the district. These facts were known in Poland, and increased the excitement there, which was somewhat reduced by a close examination of the voting. This showed that the majority of the communes voting Polish lay in the eastern part, the majority of the communes voting German being found in the western part of the plebiscitary area. The Poles thought that delimitation should be comparatively easy, but this was not the view of most members of the Commission, which reported that it was unable to agree about a frontier, owing to the intermingling of the Polish and German communes. German opinion contended, as before, that Upper Silesia, from the economic point of view, was indivisible, and rather expected, from the figures recorded of the voting, that it would be given as a whole to the Reich; further, Germany loudly maintained that if even a part of the province was taken from her she would be condemned to economic ruin, and never would be able to pay reparations.

At this time the great question that preoccupied the Allies was that of reparations. France was determined to make Germany pay up to the limit of her capacity; England agreed in principle, but was doubtful respecting that limit. An Allied Conference held at Paris on January 29, 1921, made certain demands on Germany; about a month later the first London Conference of 1921 heard the German counter-proposals which were totally unacceptable, and led, after a great deal of discussion, to the occupation of Düsseldorf, Duisburg and Ruhrort, Rhine ports, on March 8 by Allied troops. Germany appealed in vain to the League of Nations and subsequently to Washington. On March 30, 1921, the second London Conference began its sessions, which went on, with scarcely a break, into May. All German proposals were declared inadequate, and a fresh ultimatum to Germany was considered. On April 27 the Reparation Commission fixed Germany's total liability at 132 milliard gold marks (£6,600,000,000). The conference set its experts to work out a plan by which Germany would pay this amount, and it agreed that the Ruhr would be occupied by its troops if Germany refused to accept the commission's decision. Steps were taken for the occupation, but on May 11 Germany intimated her acceptance of the terms which had been laid down. This result was not reached till after a severe Ministerial crisis in Berlin, with the resignation of the Government, and the difficult formation of another. Such was the general situation when the Upper Silesia question was acute.

BRITISH OPINION

In England the bulk of opinion supported the German thesis of the indivisibility of Upper Silesia, but France was entirely hostile to it, while Italy was inclined to agree with the Germans. Towards the end of April a Polish deputation visited London with the object of enlightening the Government and the British people generally respecting the case for Poland and the treatment Poland had been receiving from Germany. That treatment was well described by the Warsaw correspondent of *The*

Times in a dispatch published on April 28; it began with a significant statement that much satisfaction had been caused in Poland by the refusal of the Ambassadors' Conference to listen to the German protest against having to hand over to the Poles 354 locomotives which ought to have been transferred to Poland under the Treaty of Versailles, an obligation which Germany had contrived to evade for months, the latest excuse being that Poland was concentrating troops on the German frontier and that the locomotives might be used for that object. *The Times'* message continued :

While German reparations are the topic of the day it may be useful to point out that Germany has not yet made the slightest amends for the damage she wrought in Poland. Of the machinery and stocks looted from Polish factories not so much as one motor has been returned, nor any compensation made for the valuable pedigree stock carried off from Polish stud-farms. Poland is having to repair her ruins without any assistance but her own. Nor is this all. Not content with escaping the making good of damage she deliberately committed Germany has tried to force Poland to give up a series of rights conferred on her by the Treaty of Versailles in connexion with the transfer of Poznan and West Prussia. The means which Germany employed for this purpose was a trade boycott, in the belief that Poland could not manage to exist without German goods. It has been Germany's deliberate policy to put as many obstacles as possible in the way of Polish recovery in order to keep her weak and compel her eventually to fall completely under German influence.

Owing to the state of British opinion at the time, the visit of the Polish deputation to London was as a voice crying in the wilderness. Presently it leaked out that Lloyd George was in favour of the German doctrine of the indivisibility of Upper Silesia. On his past record in connexion with Poland it was the view he was likely to take. Of that record D'Abernon in Volume I, page 139, of *An Ambassador of Peace* presented a partial close-up :

Regarding Upper Silesia he (Lloyd George) said : It is entirely due to England that Germany has a chance of getting the whole or part of Upper Silesia. President Wilson was anxious to give the whole country to Poland, so were the French ; the English were alone in resisting. I brought the whole Cabinet over to Paris and they sat—with brief intervals for sleep—from 6 p.m. Saturday to 10 p.m. Sunday. The

discussion was a very fair one; there was no rancour against Germany, no bitterness. The whole of the evidence was reviewed and the decision come to that, in fairness to the country, it could not be given to Poland. We should have been favourable to giving it to Germany, but we compromised on a plebiscite. My inclination is that the country should be kept together, and I will not agree to partition unless I am obliged to. We are all interested in German prosperity. After all, if we wish Germany to pay we have to leave them (*sic*) something to earn money with.

Though the Poles were afraid that Lloyd George would favour the Germans at the expense of Poland, the news that the British Prime Minister stood for the indivisibility of Upper Silesia created among them the greatest irritation and annoyance, which found expression in the breaking out on May 2, 1921, of a Polish insurrection led by Korfanty in the plebiscitary area, and in a few days the insurgents were in possession of the part of it inhabited by the Polish majority. Korfanty was disavowed by the Polish Government, but no one doubted where its sympathy and that of the whole Polish people lay. There were no British troops in the area; the French troops there showed no enthusiasm for resisting Korfanty, but the Italian forces on the ground did oppose him, as did a German irregular body, the *Selbstschütz* (Self-protection).

In England orders were given for four British battalions to be sent into Upper Silesia, and on May 13, 1921, Lloyd George made a strong speech in which he did not spare the Poles; this had an immediate repercussion in France, and the Anglo-French Entente, already wearing thin, was jeopardized. This, in its turn, led Lloyd George to take the unusual step of issuing a special *communiqué* to the Press on May 18. It started with the statement that "the attitude taken by the British, American and Italian public on the Silesian question ought not to be offensive to France. They stand by the Treaty of Versailles. . . . The fate of Upper Silesia must be decided by the Supreme Council and not by Korfanty. The children of the treaty cannot be allowed to break crockery in Europe with impunity." He added that England would abide faithfully by the decision of a majority of the Powers who had a voice under the treaty in

defining the Silesian boundaries, "whatever that verdict may be."

A truce was finally arranged between the combatants in Upper Silesia, and the Plebiscite Commission was asked by the Allies to submit a proposal in common. But there was the same opposition in the commission as there was in higher quarters; General Le Rond, the French Commissioner, stood for Poland as against the other commissioners who took the German view; it was thus impossible for them to make a unanimous report.

Throughout the summer the tension between France and England was severe. The French attitude regarding the question was that as England, consequent on the refusal of the United States to sign a treaty guaranteeing France against unprovoked attack from Germany, had been released from signing a similar treaty, France had to protect herself by depriving Germany of the minerals of Upper Silesia which otherwise would furnish raw material for munitions in a future war. France saw in giving Upper Silesia to Poland a buttress of her own security. The British attitude was that the treaty-guarantees were not included in the Versailles Treaty, and that it was not fair that the Germans should suffer because these guarantees had fallen through; Upper Silesia could be divided only in accordance with the Versailles Treaty. In Poland Korfanty was acclaimed, naturally enough, as a national hero, and he and his partisans retained their ground for some time. It was August before the Supreme Council tackled the question again.

THE VILNA QUESTION

Another question which deeply interested Poland had meanwhile reached another stage. On March 3, 1921, the Council of the League of Nations passed a resolution requesting Poland and Lithuania to enter on direct negotiations with a view to solving the question of Vilna, and accordingly a Polish-Lithuanian Conference was held. Its president was Hymans; the Polish Delegation was headed by Professor Askenazy, a

distinguished Pole of Jewish origin, and a well-known author of works in Polish, German, French and English mostly of a historical nature. Galvanauskas, Foreign Minister of Lithuania, headed the Lithuanian Delegation. The atmosphere of the conference, which opened at Brussels on April 20, 1921, was sultry, but Hymans brought to bear on it his gifts of tact and almost inexhaustible patience. He had made a close study of the subject, and was able to understand and sympathize with both sides, his fundamental idea being that Poles and Lithuanians ought to be friends, both on account of their common past history and their common present interests. On May 10 he delivered to the two delegations a sketch of an agreement by which Lithuania would be organized into two autonomous cantons, Kovno and Vilna, with the city of Vilna as their capital, to be united with Poland by a political, military and economic treaty.

Hymans explained his project in a statement to the effect that he was inspired by the hope of establishing between the two countries very close ties—"to create between them a kind of general entente, though respecting at the same time their sovereignty to the fullest extent. While these ties will not go so far as a federation, they will approach it. When this has been achieved," he continued, "we could solve the problem of Vilna by giving it to Lithuania, but establishing a régime in which the rights of the whole Polish population would be respected and the future of Polish culture fully assured." The Brussels Conference closed early in June, with the acceptance in principle by Poland of the Hymans project and its non-acceptance by Lithuania. On June 28 the Council of the League approved the Hymans scheme, and recommended Poland and Lithuania to take it as a basis for further discussion. As before, Zeligowski held possession of Vilna.

SKIRMUNT FOREIGN MINISTER

About a fortnight earlier in June an important change took place in the Witos Government, Skirmunt, who had been Polish

Minister at Rome, replacing Sapieha as Foreign Minister. Sapieha had incurred the opposition of the Right in the Sejm because he favoured the solution of the Vilna question on a federalist basis; other parties regarded him coldly, and he was not on good terms with Dabski, his own Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office and a friend of Witos. In May the Sejm's Commission on Foreign Affairs had passed a vote of non-confidence in Sapieha, at that time on a mission at Paris, and he came back to Warsaw and resigned. The general situation internally was difficult; the mark continued to fall, the cost of living rose, and unrest was increasing among the working classes of the population. The hold on office of the Witos Government was weakening steadily, and it needed strengthening, most of all respecting foreign policy and especially having regard to the critical position of the Upper Silesia question. On June 11, 1921, Witos, in agreement with Pilsudski, appointed Skirmunt Foreign Minister, with the approval of the heads of the chief parties in the Sejm.

The new Minister, though belonging to the "Realist" group, had been associated, as already recorded, with the National Democrats and had been a member of the Paris National Committee, though Rome was the scene of his activities. A native of Polish Lithuania, Skirmunt, before the World War, had been an elected member of the Council of State of Tsarist Russia. After his appointment to the post of Minister at Rome he had kept himself aloof from the strife of parties in Poland, and was to be considered as a neutral in domestic politics. From the start he devoted his sole attention to foreign affairs, bringing to bear on them the conviction that Poland's great need at the moment was to impress on Governments and public opinion abroad that her foreign policy was one of moderation, loyalty and peace, a policy that was in consonance with his own temperament and character. His aim was to establish good relations, so far as was possible, with other States.

DIFFERENCES WITH PILSUDSKI

Pilsudski had always kept two of the Ministries of the Government under his personal control—those of War and Foreign Affairs. He was keenly interested, as was to be expected, in any matter affecting the army, but he was hardly less concerned with everything connected with foreign policy, particularly when it related to Soviet Russia and Lithuania. Skirmunt's first activities as Foreign Minister were connected with the Soviet. It had been arranged when the Peace of Riga was signed that Poland and the Soviet should resume diplomatic relations by the former placing a Mission at Moscow and the latter one at Warsaw, the head in each case being a *Chargé d'Affaires* and not a Minister. Poland duly sent a Mission under a *Chargé d'Affaires* to Moscow, but the Soviet's Mission to Warsaw was presided over by a "representative," with the functions virtually of a Minister and access presumably to the Chief of the State. The representative was Karakhan, an able Bolshevik diplomatist, as he showed in China. Pilsudski declined to receive him, and Skirmunt had to smoothe out this difficulty. But there was a more serious matter which had to be settled.

One of the clauses of the Riga Treaty prescribed that both Poland and Soviet Russia should refrain from propaganda and from harbouring organizations inimical to the other contracting party, a very difficult thing to implement when the sources of propaganda and the organizations were secret and subterranean. Now in Poland and in Warsaw especially there were large numbers of Russian *émigrés* who were the open or secret enemies of the Soviet. Their most prominent leader was the well-known revolutionary Savinkoff, who at one time had a certain vogue as a novelist; he had his headquarters at the Hotel Brühl in Warsaw, and actively and openly fomented counter-revolutionary agitation against the Soviet Government. He was denounced by the Soviet representative to Skirmunt, as were other Russian counter-revolutionaries; their expulsion from Poland was demanded. It was plain that by the Riga

Treaty the Soviet was acting within its rights. But they were friends of Pilsudski, and he protected them. Skirmunt, however, insisted on the observance of the treaty, in accordance with his general policy, and Pilsudski gave way, but not with a good grace. The opposition between the Marshal and Skirmunt was accentuated by another difference of opinion—this time in connexion with the Polish representation at the League of Nations: the Assembly in September was to review the Polish-Lithuanian dispute over Vilna, and Skirmunt wished to strengthen the hands of Askenazy, the first Polish delegate, by sending to Geneva as second delegate Szebeko, who had been Polish Minister in Berlin. Szebeko, like Skirmunt, was a Lithuanian Pole, and also, like him, had been a member of the Council of State of Tsarist Russia; he was thoroughly well acquainted with all the ins and outs of the Vilna question. But he was a political enemy of Pilsudski, and it was not till Skirmunt threatened to resign that the Marshal signed his appointment—and then it was too late, Skirmunt's object being thus frustrated.

THE "INDUSTRIAL TRIANGLE"

In addition to the Vilna question the Assembly of the League, it turned out, would also have the Upper Silesia question before it. The Commissioners, not having been able to agree on a proposal in common respecting Upper Silesia, informed the Allied Governments of that fact, and the Council was summoned to meet on August 8, 1921, to take action; to help it to do so the matter was remitted some ten days before to a Committee of Experts, who failed in the upshot to agree on a line as frontier, but they concurred respecting one important matter, namely, that the intention of the Versailles Treaty had not been to assign the whole area to Poland or to Germany, but that a line as frontier should be drawn, on the basis of the voting by communes, each State being given its proper ethnical share of the province. This finding practically did away with the idea of allocating the territory as a whole to Germany. Among the rumours that had led to the Korfanty rising of

1921 was one which alleged that if there was a division Poland would get only the southern districts of Rybnik and Pszczyna (Pless), while the extremely valuable industrial part, sometimes called the "Industrial Triangle," went to Germany. The Poles protested that they were entitled to the greater part of the Triangle—the name was derived from the fact that the towns of Beuthen, Gleiwitz and Katowice stood at three angles of the industrial region. In the Committee the British representative argued strongly for the indivisibility of the Triangle, the French representative as strongly against it, unless it went to Poland; the British attitude was supported by the Japanese representative and with some hesitation by the Italian.

Upper Silesia was the outstanding feature of the Conference of Paris, August 8-13, 1921, with the opposed policies of France and England very much in evidence, the result being a deadlock, which was broken only on the last day of the conference by the adoption of the suggestion of the Italian representatives that the question of the frontier should be referred to the Council of the League under Article 11, paragraph 2, of the Covenant for a recommendation—not a decision, though that was what was meant, for, as it presently came out, the Allied Governments had solemnly undertaken to accept the solution recommended by the Council. Ishii, Acting President of the Council, convened it for August 29, 1921, and on September 1 the Council decided to entrust the preliminary examination of the question to four of its members who had no bias or special interest in the matter: the representatives of Brazil, China, Spain and Belgium, who accepted the task and forthwith proceeded to take evidence, not from official representatives of either Poland or Germany, but from delegations of miners, masters and others whether Poles or Germans from the disputed area. However, some weeks before the investigation came to an end a Ministerial crisis had occurred in Poland.

GRAVE FINANCIAL SITUATION

In addition to the highly agitating questions of Upper Silesia and Vilna the Witos Government was greatly disturbed and materially weakened by the continued and increasing gravity of the financial situation, which was indicated by the further fall of the exchange. In July it took 2,000 Polish marks to buy one dollar. Steczkowski, the Finance Minister, had tried again to better the position by seeking to raise loans both abroad and at home, but without success. He had thought of obtaining a large internal loan from the great landowners in return for some modifications of the Agrarian Reform Law of 1920; it pressed heavily on them, and all the more because they knew neither when nor how they were to be expropriated. Steczkowski's plans encountered keen opposition from the peasants and others. Witos himself strongly disapproved of them, and Steczkowski resigned on September 5, 1921; this brought about the fall of Witos and the Government four days later.

Trampczynski, Marshal of the Sejm, suggested to Pilsudski to call on Glabinski, the head of the National Democrats, to form a Government which would be based on the Right and the Centre parties in the Sejm, but the idea was dropped when it was discovered that only 127 deputies would support this combination. The Sejm in plenary session thereupon censured Trampczynski for having acted on his own initiative instead of after consultation with the chiefs of the various parties. The formation of a Parliamentary Coalition Government was next considered, but was abandoned, the truth being that none of the groups was anxious to take part in a Government the most pressing business of which would be the imposition of heavy taxation, for that would inevitably alienate the masses of the people—a thing not to be thought of, Polish politicians being very much like other politicians, in view of the general election which must be held before long. The leaders fell back on the expedient, now familiar, of constituting a purely administrative, extra-Parliamentary Cabinet. The Right submitted the name

of Korfanty, the "Tribune of Upper Silesia," but his candidature was rejected by the other parties.

THE PONIKOWSKI CABINET

In the end the choice fell on Ponikowski, rector of the Polytechnic in Warsaw, and a distinguished educationist. After studying engineering at Warsaw and agricultural science at Cracow, he had devoted himself under the old régime to the organization of the secret teaching of Polish. During the Austro-German occupation he was Minister of Education (Public Instruction) in three of the Regency Cabinets, and did a great work in establishing Polish schools on a systematic basis in Russian Poland, in which Polish had long been under severe restrictions, and in Austrian Poland, where the educational facilities of the Poles were very much better. From 1918 Ponikowski had taken no part in political life. Officially designated Prime Minister by Pilsudski, he formed his Cabinet on September 19, 1921. To the Premiership he joined the Ministry of Education; Skirmunt, Narutowicz and Sosnkowski retained in the new Government the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Public Works and War which they had respectively held under Witos; Michalski, a Lwow Professor who was an authority on economics and fiscal affairs, as well as a director of the National Bank, Lwow, was appointed Minister of Finance, but only after Ponikowski had approved his plans for the economic and financial restoration of the country. When Ponikowski presented himself to the Seym on September 27 and asked for its approval of his Government, he was received rather coldly, because of his insisting on the passing of the Electoral Law, as prescribed by the Constitution, at the earliest possible moment—a proceeding for which the Seym was not yet ready. The Seym, however, accepted the Ponikowski Cabinet.

VILNA AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

A few days before that event the Assembly of the League of Nations dealt with the Eastern Galicia and Vilna questions.

Touching the former, a Canadian delegate desired the League to come to a decision, but all it did was to pass a resolution which expressed the opinion that the Council of the League should draw the attention of the Allies to the opportunity there now was of an immediate settlement of the judicial status of Eastern Galicia. On September 24, 1921, Hymans described his plan to the Assembly for the settlement of the Vilna dispute, and narrated the efforts he had made, though fruitlessly, to bring about an agreement between Poland and Lithuania. Earlier there had been much discussion of the question in the Council, Askenazy and Galvanauskas appearing again as advocates respectively of the Polish and Lithuanian points of view. It was tolerably evident from the speeches made by Balfour and even by Bourgeois that the sympathies of the Council were not with Poland on the whole, but at the same time Lithuania was not considered blameless or over-conciliatory. The Assembly adopted a resolution which appealed to the "fraternal memories of the two peoples to achieve agreement, which was a necessity for the peace of the world." But there was no immediate result. Zeligowski remained in Vilna. On November 30, however, he issued a decree, in agreement with the Polish Government, as the *de facto* executive of Central Lithuania, fixing a general election for a Constituent Sejm for that area on January 8, 1922. In the same decree he appointed Meysztowicz head of the acting Government, and he withdrew from Vilna.

UPPER SILESIA SETTLEMENT

Thanks to the Council of the League a settlement was at last effected of the frontier in Upper Silesia. On October 13, 1921, *The Times* published what turned out to be a substantially correct report of the Council's recommendation. On the previous day this recommendation had been transmitted to the Supreme Council, but it was not officially made known to the general public till October 24. It stated that prolonged discussion and careful study had been given to the "serious problem," and that pains had been taken to interpret faithfully

the resolutions of the Versailles Treaty concerning Upper Silesia. It added:

The Council, having undertaken to seek a solution which would be in conformity with the wishes of the people as expressed by the plebiscite, and taking into account the geographical and economic position of the district, has come to the conclusion that a division of the industrial region of Upper Silesia is necessary. Owing to the geographical distribution of the population and the mixture of ethnical elements any division of this region is bound to leave large minorities on both sides, and cause the disorganization of large interests. Under the circumstances the Council considers that it is necessary to take measures which will guarantee during the period of reconstruction the continuity of the economic life of this region, which, owing to the density of the population, the number of establishments, and the network of communications presents a vast agglomeration. It has been thought advisable to assure the protection of minorities.

This eminently sane statement predicated division of the Industrial Triangle, but without disruption of its economic life, and with the protection of the minorities, whether Polish or German. The line of frontier recommended by the Council showed that nationality was the supreme consideration. In the Triangle one large angle consisting of the towns of Königshütte (Krolewska-Huta) and Katowice was given to Poland, Beuthen and Gleiwitz, the towns making the two other angles, going to Germany. The problem of the League was to reconcile the ethnic and economic aspects of this division of the territory, and it solved it in part by prolonging the economic unity of the whole area for fifteen years. Poland was already bound by her Minorities Treaty to give equal rights to Germans within her portion of Upper Silesia once it had been attributed to her, but Germany was under no like obligation respecting Polish nationals in her portion. The League recommended that the relevant parts of the Polish Minorities Treaty should be accepted by the German Government, and the Ambassadors' Conference decreed that this should be the case for the transitional period of fifteen years. Further, to implement the carrying out of the whole affair there were set up an Arbitral Tribunal composed of a Polish and a German arbiter, with a neutral president, for the settlement of private disputes, and a Mixed

Commission, consisting of two Poles and two Germans from Upper Silesia and a neutral president, both neutrals being appointed by the League; the commission was charged with the carrying out of the arrangements generally. A Polish German Convention was to be drawn up embodying everything.

France raised certain objections, but the League's recommendation was accepted by the Allies, October 19-20, 1921. Briand, as president of the Ambassadors' Conference, addressed covering letters to the Polish and German Governments respectively, together with the text of the decision. In his letter Briand pointedly stated that the Allies considered that their decision constituted a whole that they were firmly resolved all parties concerned must observe. Poland received the award—the frontier traced—with mixed feelings; it was not in accordance with her wishes, but it gave her substantial advantages. In the Sejm Ponikowski on October 26 said that while the Polish Government accepted the decision, it could not but call attention to the fact that if the vote had not been given to the German out-voters there assuredly would have been a Polish majority in the plebiscitary area. Opinion in France was not wholly favourable to the decision—Poland should have been given more; opinion in England was unfavourable too—Germany should have been given more; but in neither country was there serious opposition. Germany was full of lamentation, though the larger part of Upper Silesia was left to her. The German Government, then headed by Wirth, immediately resigned—October 21—as a protest, the effect of which was somewhat discounted by its almost immediate return to office; in the Reichstag Wirth obtained a vote of confidence on October 26. Next day the German Ambassador in Paris sent a letter of protest to the Ambassadors' Conference, for which body Briand replied on October 29 that it considered the protest of the German Government as unfounded, null and void. About a month later negotiations began at Geneva between the Poles and the Germans for the convention prescribed by the decision; Calonder, a former President of Switzerland, presided, but final agreement was not reached till May, 1922.

DANZIG-POLISH TREATY

Another important event made October, 1921, memorable; it was the signing in Warsaw, on the 24th of the month, of a treaty between Poland and Danzig. This treaty had been preceded by a Polish-German Convention signed at Paris on April 21, 1921, by which, in accordance with Article 89 of the Versailles Treaty, Poland granted free transit across her territory—the so-called Corridor—between Germany and East Prussia, without customs and passport formalities, thus making the frontiers practically invisible, and thus also removing one of the objections advanced by Germany against the attribution of the "Corridor" to Poland. The convention came into force in 1922, and from the outset was loyally observed by Poland, not only as concerned passage across Pomerania but across Poznan as well. The interests of Danzig in that convention were taken charge of by Poland. The treaty between Poland and the Free City contained no less than 244 Articles, and covered a great deal of ground; it regulated the individual rights of Polish citizens, the right of acquiring Danzig citizenship, intercourse across the frontiers, the opening of Polish commercial businesses in Danzig, the right of purchasing real estate, and questions of jurisdiction, Customs, finance, navigation, imports and exports, and the railways.

Sahm and members of the Danzig Senate visited Warsaw for the signing of the treaty, to which they affixed the historic seal of Old Danzig. Both the High Commissioner of the League resident in the Free City and the Council of the League had constantly before them matters in dispute between Poland and Danzig which in general were caused by the pro-German attitude of Sahm and the Senate, and their evident desire to make things as difficult as possible for the Poles. The treaty settled some of the contentious points, but others remained as a perpetual source of trouble. It was in these circumstances, coupled with the sharp recollection of the hostile attitude of the Danzigers in refusing to unload munitions for Poland in 1920 when her need of them was extreme, that the idea of

building a port on purely Polish soil, with absolutely free access to the sea, was conceived and came to birth in Poland.

In November, 1921, an improvement in the relations of Poland and Czechoslovakia was seen in the conclusion of a Defensive Convention between these States. Two months earlier a treaty of commerce had been signed by them at Warsaw—a good thing for both nations and an indication of a better state of feeling, though the situation was still delicate, as was shown some months later. A friendly agreement with Czechoslovakia was an essential part of the peaceful, conciliatory policy of Skirmunt, and he found that Benesh thought in the same way of Czechoslovakia's relations with Poland. Both realized that only on the integral observance of the treaties of 1919 could peace really be consolidated and the status of Europe, particularly of Central Europe, maintained.

POLISH-CZECHOSLOVAK TREATY

It was during 1921 that the ex-Emperor Charles made his two attempts to regain the throne of Hungary. Czechoslovakia, with Yugoslavia and Rumania—the Little Entente—was determined that no Habsburg should reign in Budapest again, no matter how much the Magyars might desire it. Skirmunt's attitude to Czechoslovakia met with opposition in Poland because friendship with Hungary was traditional with many Poles. In keeping with his policy he sent Piltz, who had been Minister at Belgrade, to Prague in the same capacity; Piltz was known to be on good terms with the Little Entente. During the second attempt of Charles, Skirmunt directed the Polish Minister at Budapest to associate himself with the Allies and the Little Entente in opposing Charles and putting pressure on the Hungarian Government. Skirmunt visited Prague and signed with Benesh the Defensive Convention on November 6, 1921. By this treaty both States mutually guaranteed their territorial integrity, and agreed, in case of an attack on one of them by a neighbouring State, to observe a benevolent neutrality and to permit the free passage of war material. Poland declared

her disinterestedness in Slovakia and Czechoslovakia hers in Eastern Galicia. Each State undertook to dissolve on its territory all organizations aiming at the severance of parts of the other State and, to that end, to suppress propaganda. Disputes between the two States were to be settled by arbitration.

Benesh said of this treaty that it "put an end to the unsettled relations existing between the States as a result of the diplomatic controversies respecting Teschen, and laid the foundation of peaceful neighbourly existence and collaboration." But the treaty was not ratified by Poland; it came to grief in 1922 over the possession of Jaworzyna, a small commune in the High Tatra region of the Carpathians, with a population of some 400 and about as many acres of arable land, though it had a total extent of upwards of 14,000 acres. This absurd dispute, which was settled eventually against Poland by the International Court of Justice at The Hague in December, 1923, postponed the *rapprochement* of the two countries. But before that came about Skirmunt's policy had a favourable issue, for at the Genoa Conference in April, 1922, the Little Entente cordially co-operated with Poland.

CENSUS OF POLAND, 1921

In November, 1921, the results were available of the census of the population of Poland which had been taken on September 30, 1921. The census did not cover the part of Upper Silesia finally assigned to Poland, nor could Vilna be included in it, as the status of Central Lithuania was still in suspense. What the census showed was a total of 25,406,103, which, however, did not include the military forces. Later when these figures were finally corrected, and Upper Silesia and Vilna were added, the total population was put at more than 27 millions, of whom, roughly, about 69 per cent. were Poles, the remainder comprising upwards of three million Ukrainians, more than two and a half million Jews, one and a half million White Russians, an equal number of Germans, and small numbers of Lithuanians and Latvians. The National Minori-

ties thus composed nearly one-third of the population; the Ukrainians were not only the most numerous but the most concentrated—in the south-east of the country; the Jews were scattered all over the land, but were found in large numbers in the cities, as noted in a previous chapter; the White Russians had their homes in the north-east; the Germans were a decreasing quantity and large numbers of them had already withdrawn from Poznan and Pomerania. Warsaw was credited with 931,176 inhabitants, and Lodz, the next largest city, with 451,813; Poznan, with 165,623, had become, owing to the German efflux, the most Polish city in Poland.

The census showed that while what was German Poland had suffered comparatively little from the War and the subsequent fighting, all the rest of Poland—the eastern theatre of the conflict for six years—had endured heavy losses, as was inevitable. The decrease in population was, of course, not half the tale in that large area. In 1921 Poland was still importing foodstuffs in large quantities; but that year was a year of peace, and the labour of the hard-working Polish peasantry was beginning to tell in fields retilled and cottages rebuilt. The grain harvest in 1921 amounted to seven and a half million tons compared with two and a quarter million tons in 1920. There was a parallel revival in the national industries; it received a check, however, in October, which was met by the emission of fresh Government credits on a large scale, a reduction of railway rates, and a lowering of the tax on coal; the revival continued thereafter. In a word, the economic life of Poland was beginning to flow strongly in the right direction, but the general financial situation of the country was bad and remained a serious obstacle to any rapid all-round improvement.

FINANCIAL SITUATION DEALT WITH

Michalski, the Finance Minister, succeeded in fixing the attention of the Sejm on the financial situation which he described in the most pessimistic terms in a speech delivered in December, 1921. He predicted a heavy deficit in the revenue

when taken into account with the expenditure, and stated that only great sacrifices on the part of the whole nation could bring about an equilibrium of the Budget. The programme he proposed had three chief features: an intensification of the production of the country, for which purpose the Government would give assistance; strict economy, including a great reduction in the number of Government functionaries, a much overgrown class at the time, and a reduction in the strength of the army, the cost of which amounted to more than half of the total national expenditure; and the imposition of the *danina*, which was explained as an "extraordinary national contribution" to the revenue, but in effect a capital levy, that was also intended to provide a basis for the formation of a "bank of issue."

After these proposals had been discussed in the Budget Commission of the Sejm they were put before the Sejm itself on December 9, 1921; the debate lasted a week, and resulted in their being accepted in the main—a distinct success for Michalski—by large majorities. On December 16 the Sejm voted the *danina*, and on the following day passed a law for "the amelioration of the financial administration of the State," which conferred on the Finance Minister virtually dictatorial powers inasmuch as he had the sole right of controlling the financial organization and work of the various State Departments; it authorized him to undertake the necessary measures for economy in conjunction with the Ministers concerned. The Cabinet had no longer the right to pass estimates of expenditure without the approval of the Finance Minister; the Sejm was placed under the same ban. A Financial Council was created as an advisory body to the Ministry of Finance.

Almost at once the "axe" fell. The Ministry of Provisioning was abolished, as were various other State services; the State monopolies were reorganized; more than half of the army was demobilized. It was estimated that the *danina* would bring in eighty to a hundred milliards of Polish marks, the hoped-for result being the withdrawal from circulation of half the inflated currency, the stoppage of fresh emissions of banknotes, and the attainment of budgetary equilibrium. The struggle to

regulate the currency had been part of the whole terrible national struggle at the outset in 1918-19. The monetary system had been chaotic. In circulation simultaneously there were Russian roubles—Tsarist, Kerensky and Soviet—of unequal value, Austrian crowns, German marks and Polish marks; the last had been established by the Germans, who had set up in Warsaw the "Polish Territorial Loan Fund" to issue these marks under the guarantee of the Reichsbank, the Polish mark being held as equivalent to the German mark, then worth about an English shilling.

When the Germans evacuated Poland the issue of these Polish marks exceeded 880 millions, a disastrous heritage for the Poles. The Territorial Fund was taken over by the Government, and it was given by decree the sole right to issue banknotes. On January 15, 1920, an Act was passed making the Polish mark the only legal tender, and the other currencies were withdrawn from circulation within the next few months. The collection of taxes, difficult in any case from the impoverishment of the population, was made still harder by the different currencies with their fluctuating values; as already stated, the Polish mark had suffered a great diminution and it continued to depreciate; at the end of September, 1921, it took more than 6,500 Polish marks to buy one dollar; then there was an improvement, which Michalski's reforms increased, and on December 31, 1921, the exchange was a little below 3,000 to the dollar. Concurrently the amount received from taxation by the Government was enlarged. The year closed with a more optimistic feeling respecting the financial situation; in spite of everything it had been a year of advance; foreigners who visited the country in 1921 were astonished to see on every side manifest signs of its growth in organization and stability.

CHAPTER VI

THE PARLIAMENT AND PILSUDSKI

1922-1923

I

IMPORTANT as was the period covered by the years 1922-23 in the history of post-War Europe in general, it was not less so for Poland in particular. Like 1921, the year 1922 was marked by the holding of great international conferences—Cannes, Genoa, The Hague, London—the results of which were of a negative character, the questions discussed—Reparations, Reconstruction, Russia—being of so difficult and contentious a nature that agreement was almost impossible among the Allies. The tension between France and England increased. Early in 1922 Poincaré replaced Briand, with a distinct stiffening of French policy towards Germany. In October Lloyd George fell, and was succeeded by Bonar Law, who, if more conciliatory in some respects than the other, was far from seeing eye to eye with Poincaré. In January, 1923, the deadlock was complete. When the French occupied the Ruhr, the British Government disapproved, but, not to force a real rupture, announced its benevolent neutrality. Germany tried to counter the French move by passive resistance in the Ruhr, and supported its population by issuing unlimited quantities of paper marks, the upshot being the bankruptcy of the Reich, as well as the collapse of passive resistance. All Europe was more or less demoralized, but as 1923 neared its close some gleams of light appeared in the darkness when America made suggestions that led in 1924 to the Dawes Plan for Reparations.

Like other States, Poland shared the disquietudes, uncertainties, and anxieties of that troubled time. Her interest in Germany and Russia was very direct; she stood by France her ally, but she persisted in proclaiming that her policy was one of peace and conciliation. After the practical failure of the Cannes Con-

ference which Lloyd George had convened for the "pacification of Europe and its economic reconstruction," the rumours current that France was about to come to an agreement with the Soviet were no doubt disturbing to Poland, as it was alleged that her abandonment by France would be a condition. These rumours died away, and in any case the German-Soviet Treaty of Rapallo, which came out of the Genoa Conference, gave her much more serious cause for apprehension, as any indication of an alliance between Germany and Russia could not fail to concern her very deeply. But the events of 1923 demonstrated that she had nothing to fear either from Germany or the Soviet, at least at the time. What interested her most profoundly in 1922-23 was her own internal situation—summarized in the heading of this chapter, the Parliament and Pilsudski.

CENTRAL LITHUANIA

Poland's position *vis-à-vis* the neighbouring States in the beginning of 1922 was described by Skirmunt, her Foreign Minister, in a statement to the Press:

The way which opens before Poland at the opening of the New Year is bright with sunshine. Good relations exist between her and all her neighbours. The Polish-Czechoslovak *rapprochement* is a guarantee of the peace of Central Europe. I have not lost hope that Polish-Lithuanian relations will end likewise in a *rapprochement*—which is the desire of the whole Polish nation. It will be the same perhaps with respect to Russia. The relations which subsist between Poland and France and between Poland and Rumania are as fraternal as they can be.

In this chain of good things the weakest link at the moment was seen in the reference to Polish-Lithuanian relations, concerning which events soon took a decisive course, though not precisely in the direction of the *rapprochement* desired. The general election for a Constituent Sejm which Meysztowicz, as head of its Government, had ordered for Central Lithuania was held on January 8, 1922, despite the protest of the Lithuanian Government. There were 106 seats to be filled, and the vote was given to all inhabitants, male and female, 21 years of age,

who had been resident in the country for three years and whatever their nationality; the franchise was eminently democratic. The election was boycotted by the local Lithuanians and partly by the Jews of the city of Vilna; the cold was intense and the means of communication were bad; yet nearly 65 per cent. of the possible voters voted, for of the 387,397 persons on the electoral rolls, 249,325 recorded their votes. In the city of Vilna, notwithstanding the abstention of the Jewish population, 43,489 votes were cast out of a possible 79,348, or about 55 per cent. In some of the country districts 95 per cent. of the votes were polled. In all cases the election proceeded without disturbances or unfortunate incident—a remarkable tribute to the order that was maintained by the provisional Government, which put no pressure, as foreign journalists present testified, on the inhabitants to vote or not to vote, though the Lithuanian Government afterwards alleged that the voting was not free. Of the deputies elected 69 belonged to the political parties, corresponding to similar parties in Poland, who advocated the incorporation of Central Lithuania with the Polish Republic. The Seym of Central Lithuania met in Vilna on February 1, 1922.

VILNA SEYM'S RESOLUTION

Meanwhile the Lithuanian Government had brought the question once more before the Council of the League of Nations. On January 13, 1922, the Lithuanian delegate, Sidzikauskas, requested the Council to draw the attention of the Supreme Council to the gravity of the Polish-Lithuanian dispute, and to ask it to fix the eastern frontiers of Poland in accordance with the 3rd paragraph of Article 87 of the Versailles Treaty, as that fixation would settle the matter. The Council practically did nothing. The Seym of Central Lithuania on February 20 passed the subjoined resolution, 96 deputies voting for it and 6 abstaining from voting:

In the Name of Almighty God, We, the Seym of Vilna, elected by the free and universal will of the population of the country of Vilna; possessing fullness of right to decide the fate of this country; remem-

bering the secular ties which, crowned by the treaties of Horodlo and Lublin (1413 and 1569), as well as by the Constitution of May 3, 1791, joined our countries (Poland and Lithuania) in one union; remembering the blood poured out by our ancestors in the national struggles after the wicked partition of the fatherland; rendering homage to the courage and the sacrifices of Polish soldiers and Marshal Pilsudski, the son of this country, as also the heroic action of General Zeligowski; in agreement with the right of the self-determination of peoples; in the name of the population of this country, its present and future generations; aiming at their liberty and their full spiritual and material development:

At the session of February 20 we decide to decree:

1. We regard as irrevocably broken all legal and political ties which were imposed on us by force by the Russian State; likewise, we deny to Russia the right to interfere in questions concerning the country of Vilna;

2. We reject and throw aside for ever the legal and political pretensions to the country of Vilna on the part of the Lithuanian Republic—pretensions set forth in the Lithuanian-Soviet Treaty of July 12, 1920, as well as all other pretensions;

3. We solemnly declare that we shall not recognize any decision taken by foreign factors contrary to our will respecting the fate of the country and its interior organization;

4. The country of Vilna forms, without reserve or condition, an integral part of the Polish Republic;

5. The Polish Republic alone possesses full sovereignty over this country;

6. Only the competent authorities of the Polish Republic possess, solely and exclusively, the right to decide as regards law and the organization of the country of Vilna, in accordance with the Constitution of the Polish Republic of March 17, 1921;

7. We invite the Sejm as constituted and the Government of the Polish Republic to proceed immediately to the execution of the rights and duties resulting from the title of sovereignty of the Polish Republic over the country of Vilna.

This impressive resolution, at once so comprehensive and so decided in its language, was placed by the Vilna Sejm in charge of a delegation of twenty of its members who were ordered to go to Warsaw and bring it officially to the notice of the Polish Government with a view to negotiating an Act of Union between the "country of Vilna" and the Polish Republic. The delegation arrived in Warsaw on March 2, 1922; two days later the rest of the deputies of the Vilna Sejm were also there—to find the Polish Government in the throes of

a Cabinet crisis that had been caused by the resolution or rather by its uncompromising terms, which were not in accordance with the Act of Union prepared in advance by that Government. The Third Article of the Act prescribed the attribution by the Polish Sejm to the Vilna territory of a special Statute conferring autonomy upon it, whereas the Vilna Sejm had pronounced for the complete absorption of the region by Poland. The Ponikowski Cabinet was afraid that the annexation, pure and simple, of Vilna would cause serious international complications. The Right clamoured for incorporation, some of the political groups hesitated, the Left opposed it; the conflict between the incorporationists and the federalists broke out afresh, and when Ponikowski resigned on March 3, 1922, Pilsudski accepted his resignation.

For some weeks previously the position of the Ponikowski Government had been precarious. Made up of men drawn from the Right and the Left, it contained within itself the seeds of disunion. Some of the parties which had assisted in forming the Government, and notably that of Witos, attacked it, their assaults being directed principally against Michalski and Skirmunt. On February 11, 1922, the Government submitted to the Sejm a Bill to give State grants in aid of the agricultural reconstruction of the country; the Sejm held up the Bill, and consequently Narutowicz, Minister of Public Works, resigned on the ground of the opposition of Michalski. Four days afterwards the Government modified the measure, and Pilsudski declined to accept the resignation of Narutowicz; the crisis passed, but it left the Government weaker. Ponikowski, under the fire of criticisms on Downarowicz, Minister of the Interior, had a series of interviews with the leaders of the groups in the Sejm, without effecting much improvement of the situation. The Vilna question next became acute. On February 20 Lithuania sent a Note proposing that the Polish-Lithuanian controversy should be submitted to the International Court at The Hague. In reply the Polish Government stated that the controversy had already been brought before the Council of the League of Nations, whose decisions had not been accepted

by Lithuania; it was useless to take it elsewhere. So far as Vilna was concerned, the representatives of that territory had pronounced unequivocally for union with Poland. The Polish Government, however, was ready to enter on negotiations with Lithuania with a view to establishing friendly relations between the two countries.

PONIKOWSKI'S SECOND CABINET

For some days the Governmental crisis continued. While efforts were being made to resolve it the Ministers of France, England and Italy at Warsaw called on Skirmunt, and told him that the annexation of Vilna, without some form of autonomy, by Poland went beyond the policy of their Governments; international difficulties must therefore arise if annexation was persisted in. When this proceeding became known the position of Ponikowski, whose attitude respecting Vilna it supported, was much strengthened. All the groups except the Right designated him for the Premiership again; other considerations which helped to end the crisis in his favour were the impossibility of forming a purely Parliamentary Government and the unwisdom of making a change in the Government when the Genoa Conference was so close at hand. The latter consideration made the reappointment of Skirmunt as Foreign Minister so desirable that Ponikowski stated he would not form a Government unless it included him in that capacity. A. Zaleski, then Director of Political Affairs under the Government, was mentioned for the post, but he was opposed by the National Democrats, who remembered against him his activities in England in the days of the Paris National Committee. Finally the Witos group agreed to Skirmunt's reappointment. On March 10 Ponikowski formed another Government, yet it differed little from its predecessor; Michalski and Skirmunt held their former positions, but Downarowicz and two other Ministers were replaced by new men. Ponikowski presented himself and his Cabinet to the Sejm on March 21, and in the course of a speech on his policy said that the Government would try to

realize the incorporation of Vilna in such a manner as would exclude the possibility of protests from any quarter. Concerning the internal situation he stated that his chief efforts would be directed to the amelioration of the country's finances by finding new sources of revenue and by large economies; the railways would be put in such a better condition that they would supply the natural lines of transit between the West and the East. He counted on reaching very soon a Concordat with the Holy See. Poland's policy, he declared, was one of conciliation and peace, but the foundation of that policy was close and friendly collaboration with France.

BALTIC STATES CONFER AT WARSAW

At this time Poland's policy was also manifested by co-operation with the Little Entente and with the Baltic States. Regarding the former, Poland had a representative in the Conference of Experts which was held at Belgrade in the second week of March, 1922, the object of which was to arrange for common action from the economic point of view at the approaching Genoa Conference. Touching the Baltic States, a Conference of these States—Poland, Finland, Estonia and Latvia—Lithuania absented herself—was held in Warsaw on March 13. Skirmunt was elected president, and defined the purpose of their meeting as the coming to an understanding on important questions of mutual interest to the four States in face of the Genoa Conference, and the safeguarding of the treaties which were the foundation of their existence. This conference terminated on March 17 by the signature of a convention by which the four States recognized reciprocally the treaties they had concluded with Soviet Russia; resolved to enter into administrative and economic agreements for their common benefit; guaranteed the rights of the National Minorities; and agreed to observe benevolent neutrality if any of them was attacked without provocation on its part. It looked as if a Baltic League had been created, Poland forming the link between it and the Little Entente. Foreign opinion was impressed. In the *Journal des*

Débats Pierre de Quirielle said: "The action of such men as MM. Ponikowski, Skirmunt and Michalski, who have conceived and carried out with firmness and good sense a clear and definite programme both at home and abroad, has succeeded within a few months in raising the moral credit of the Polish State."

VILNA INCORPORATED

One of the first things the reorganized Ponikowski Government had to do was to come to terms with the delegates of the Vilna Sejm. The federal idea was completely dropped, and after negotiations between the Government and the delegates an Act of Incorporation was signed by them on March 22, 1922. Two days later the Sejm of Poland unanimously decided that the twenty delegates sent by the Vilna Sejm to Warsaw should be recognized as the duly constituted representatives of Vilna and district in the Polish Sejm; the delegates forthwith took their seats as deputies. On March 28 the Marshal (Speaker) of the Vilna Sejm announced the dissolution of that body. Central Lithuania ceased to exist; so far as Poland was concerned all that was lacking to the final settlement of the Vilna question was the recognition by the Allies of the "state of fact" which had been established, but nearly a year had to elapse before that recognition was accorded. The next thing the Government dealt with was finance.

The capital levy or *danina* had gone into effect and was well received; some Poles declared their desire to contribute a larger sum than that for which they had been assessed, while others, who had not been assessed at all, asked for inclusion in the list, thus showing a fine spirit. For the first quarter of 1922 the total amount collected amounted to twelve milliards of Polish marks, Poznan leading with upwards of five milliards, former Russian Poland coming next with four milliards, and Western Galicia making up the remainder. On the score of economy no fewer than 25,000 Government functionaries were retired. The army was reduced to 250,000 men, with a proportionate lowering of the expenditure. Sikorski, then Chief of

the General Staff, told the Sejm's Army Commission, that while the High Command was animated by the most pacific disposition and was anxious to help in improving the financial position of the country, it did not believe that further reduction in men or money was possible, having regard to the national security. Expenditure on the army had been brought down to 18·5 per cent. of the whole expenditure of the State.

On March 27, 1922, Michalski delivered a speech of four hours' length in the Sejm dealing with the entire subject, and he maintained that the public finances were being steadily improved. He gave as examples a decrease in the circulation of paper marks of one milliard and two hundred million marks, and a reduction of the National Debt by five and a half milliard of marks. When he spoke the rate of exchange was about 4,000 marks to the dollar; it remained about that figure till June, 1922, when it began to fall again. Michalski's statement was thought to be encouraging by the Polish Press and people, and general attention passed to speculations respecting the Conference of Genoa which was drawing near. There was another lull in the political arena, the Sejm rose for a fortnight's holiday, and discussion of the speeches of Ponikowski and Michalski was postponed till the last week of April when the Sejm resumed its sessions.

During the interval Vilna and its territory were taken over by Poland. On April 18 Pilsudski, accompanied by Ponikowski and other Ministers, Cardinal Dalbor, the Polish Primate, and other notables, took part in Vilna in a moving ceremony, in the course of which the president (mayor) of the city presented the keys of Vilna to the Marshal, and an Act was signed consecrating Poland's sovereign rights over the region. Afterwards a *Te Deum* was celebrated in the cathedral by the cardinal. At the banquet which followed, Pilsudski made a speech in which he referred to Lithuania: "I cannot refrain," he said, "from holding out my hand across the barrier which separates us to those of Kovno who perhaps regard this day of our triumph as a day of defeat and of mourning. I cannot abstain from offering my hand and appealing for concord and affection—I cannot regard them

otherwise than as brothers." But the "Kovno Government"—the Poles spoke of the "Lithuania of Kovno"—showed what it felt by refusing to have even posts and telegraphs established between the two countries, and obstinately maintained its claim to Vilna. On May 12 Lithuania again requested the Council of the League of Nations to fix the eastern frontiers of Poland.

GENOA CONFERENCE

As the matters to be considered by the Conference of Genoa were stated in terms so general as to lead to an impression of vagueness, the States which had not issued the invitations to the conference were greatly concerned to obtain in advance more definite particulars respecting the proposals that were likely to be submitted by the Great Powers. Skirmunt, who was the principal delegate of Poland, paid a series of visits to the capitals of the Allies in order to discover their respective policies; some weeks earlier Benesh had made a similar trip on behalf of the Little Entente to Paris and London. With Narutowicz as second Polish delegate Skirmunt arrived at Genoa on April 8, 1922, and immediately got into touch with the Little Entente delegation for the purpose of their concentrating on a common programme. On April 11 he was elected a member of the important Political Sub-Commission composed of representatives of the Inviting States, and of Soviet Russia, Germany, Switzerland, Poland, Sweden and Rumania. The dominant issue before the conference was the renewal of relations with the Soviet, and this was forced to the front suddenly and unexpectedly when it became known on April 17 that Germany had signed a treaty—the Treaty of Rapallo—with Russia behind the back of the conference, which in the result was virtually wrecked by it.

On March 18, Barthou, head of the French Delegation, strongly advocated that the Inviting Powers should bring Poland and the Little Entente into consultation with them respecting the new situation that had arisen; the proposal was agreed to unanimously, and Skirmunt took an active part in the

subsequent discussion. He explained at length how Poland was affected by the Soviet-German treaty, and how she was well aware of the gravity of the "sanctions" proposed by the Allies. "We shall adhere," he said, "to the proposals of the Allies, as we think that the place of Poland is always by the side of the Entente Powers." His statements pleased neither the Germans nor the Bolsheviks, who forthwith commenced a campaign of calumny, among the reports set on foot being one to the effect that Poland had been about to sign a treaty with Germany! Chicherin, who presided over the Soviet Delegation, next tried to intimidate Skirmunt by stating that his action was in violation of the Treaty of Riga, 1921, and also of an agreement signed at Riga on March 30, 1922, by the Soviet, Poland, Latvia and Estonia. Skirmunt had no difficulty in refuting these allegations; with respect to the Baltic agreement cited by Chicherin the reply was that it merely stated that it would be opportune for the economic restoration of Eastern Europe if recognition was accorded to Soviet Russia—an expression of opinion merely, and not an undertaking to support recognition, as Chicherin had said it was. In subsequent conversations with Chicherin Skirmunt firmly maintained his point of view; he suggested to Barthou, Lloyd George and others, however, that a way out of the *impasse* in which the conference found itself respecting Russia might lie in the dispatch to Russia of an international commission of experts—a conciliatory move.

Though Lloyd George had expressly declared to Skirmunt that the question of Poland's eastern frontiers would not be raised at the conference without previous consultation with him, yet on May 10 Lloyd George, without informing Skirmunt, did raise the question by strongly insisting at a meeting of the Inviting Powers that the questions of Vilna and Eastern Galicia should be settled by the conference. But Barthou did not concur, and it was decided that these questions should be dealt with by the Political Sub-Commission, which four days later reported that their settlement was not included in the programme of the conference; had the verdict been the opposite Poland was determined to withdraw from the conference.

Skirmunt, conformably with his policy, supported the pact of non-aggression which the conference evolved, and also favoured the meeting of an Expert Committee at The Hague which it was proposed should be held on June 26. The fact remained that the conference taken as a whole was a failure, which afterwards was made abundantly evident by the failure too of The Hague Conference.

SOVIET-GERMAN TREATY OF RAPALLO

Both of these conferences were overshadowed by the Treaty of Rapallo and the intransigence of the Soviet. Naturally there was disquiet in Poland and Eastern Europe because of the treaty and its possible outcome. The treaty was said by its defenders to have an exclusively economic character, but certain actions of the Soviet rather indicated this might not be strictly true respecting Poland. The Soviet ceased to carry out the terms of the Treaty of Riga. It had organized armed bands in Soviet White Russia as far back as April which attacked their Polish neighbours, and in May the Polish Government had sent a Note to Moscow demanding the putting down of these raiders. Soviet troops continued their concentration in the regions bordering Polish territory; the Soviet Army was being reorganized, it was reported, by German generals. In May the *Eclair* of Paris published what purported to be a military convention between the heads of the Red Army and the German General Staff which had been signed at Berlin on April 3. Poland had good cause to be alert, to keep on her guard, as against the Soviet, as well as Germany. Another matter for concern was that Finland presently decided not to ratify the convention which had been agreed to on March 17 by Poland and the Baltic States at Warsaw; part of the Polish Press saw in this a consequence of the Rapallo Treaty. On May 31 Skirmunt described to the Sejm what had taken place at Genoa; the alliance with France, he declared, had been the basis of Polish policy at the conference, as before it, and the Polish Delegation had done all it could to prevent the conference from failure.

GENEVA CONVENTION RESPECTING UPPER SILESIA

At Geneva a convention concerning Upper Silesia as divided between Poland and Germany was signed on May 15, the document itself being of extraordinary length—605 Articles: it was longer even than the Treaty of Versailles which changed the map of Europe. The German representative who signed it made a formal declaration that Germany accepted under constraint the decision of the Ambassadors' Conference—and looked to the future for redress! The Sejm ratified the convention on May 24, the Reichstag on May 31; there were demonstrations in both Parliaments. In the former the speakers pronounced for ratification, though they complained Poland had not obtained all the territory that should have been hers; in the latter there were signs of mourning—over the building the German flag was half-masted, and in the chamber, in front of Loebe the president, the white-and-yellow standard of Upper Silesia was shrouded in black, with the eagle of Upper Silesia in crape. Wirth spoke of the sufferings inflicted on Upper Silesia by the “wicked Treaty of Versailles,” and he was followed by representatives of the various political parties who affirmed that Germanism would ever remain alive in the territory. Ratification was carried, however, by a large majority, the Right and the Communists forming the dissidents. Loebe said after the vote had been taken that the German protest against the partition of Upper Silesia would never be withdrawn, and the German Press echoed his words. Six weeks passed before the Polish Government entered into possession, and before that took place a Ministerial crisis in Warsaw, evolving differently in its nature from others that had preceded it, had engendered much excitement in political circles and throughout the country.

PONIKOWSKI CABINET RESIGNS

Ponikowski's second Cabinet had from the beginning a hardly less precarious existence than his first, which was not surprising as the composition of both was so much the same. But there

was a sort of political truce among the groups while the Conference of Genoa was proceeding, and this armistice ended with the close of the conference. Even during this period of relative calm the Government had been disturbed by a conflict between Michalski and the Ministry of War over the pay of the army. A Bill respecting the general election had been discussed, but had made no progress, owing, it was supposed, to lack of agreement in the Cabinet. Pilsudski had intervened in the army difficulty, and had effected a compromise. Early in June he intervened again—this time concerning the Government itself, which he took upon himself to dismiss. On June 2, 1922, he invited Ponikowski and the rest of the Government to the Belvedere, his residence, and asked for a statement of its policy—an unusual step; he criticized its actions, and particularly censured the policy of Skirmunt for what he considered its weakness touching Soviet Russia. It was plain that the Ministry did not possess his confidence, and Ponikowski and his colleagues decided by vote to resign. A second meeting of the Cabinet with Pilsudski at the Belvedere was arranged for June 6; when it took place the Government was informed by him that he accepted its resignation—virtually it was dismissed. Hence arose a crisis of the first magnitude between the Sejm and Pilsudski, and it lasted for nearly two months.

PILSUDSKI FORCES CRISIS WITH THE SEYM

Next day the heads of the groups in the Sejm—the *Konwent Senjorow*—met to discuss the situation, the real question being whether or not Pilsudski, as Chief of the State, had the right to dismiss the Government; it was agreed to demand explanations of the affair from him, as well as from Ponikowski, and Trampczynski, as Marshal of the Sejm, went to the Belvedere to inform him of this decision. On June 8 Pilsudski made a declaration before the "Seniors," justifying what he had done. He said that Poland was standing in the midst of a very difficult period—the general election must be held very shortly, with the result that there would be great political excitement and

agitation throughout the country, which would be all the more dangerous because of the instability of the whole international situation, for that instability, which he did not think would soon be terminated, was bound to have its repercussions internally. In these circumstances it was necessary, he maintained, that Poland should have a Government strong enough to uphold her prestige abroad and to cope with feverish conditions at home. The Government which had retired had no great authority such as was indispensable. It had not a firm backing in the Sejm. It was conscious of its lack of authority, and it had sought to support itself on his (Piłsudski's) authority as Chief of the State, but the powers of the Chief of the State were extremely limited, and he could not give what he did not possess. Therefore the Government had to go. What was requisite was a really strong Government.

Ponikowski had issued a statement to the effect that his Cabinet had withdrawn because of a divergence of opinion with Piłsudski regarding the situation—"as the harmony of co-operation between the executive powers has been broken, owing to differences in the evaluation of the present state of affairs." This did not disclose very much, and Piłsudski's own declaration, which he had put into writing, was not thought to be particularly illuminating. The "Seniors" asked him various questions in order to clarify matters. Was it true that the differences between him and the Ponikowski Government were occasioned by his demanding increased military credits and that he was planning a new defensive war against Soviet Russia? Piłsudski bluntly replied that it was not true, and reminded them that it belonged to him as the Chief of the State to accept or not to accept the resignation of the Government when it was submitted to him.

Piłsudski then withdrew from the meeting, and the heads of the parties went on with their discussions; while these were continuing he conferred with Ponikowski and Skirmunt with regard to his visit to Bucarest, which had already been arranged, and decided to postpone it till the Parliamentary crisis was resolved. After Skirmunt left, Piłsudski had a long conversation with

Ponikowski, and thereafter sent to the party heads an additional declaration telling them that on June 2, at the meeting of the Government with him, there had been merely a question of the general administration and the co-ordination of the services. He had taken five days—from June 2 to June 6—to consider the whole situation on a broader basis, and had dismissed the Cabinet only after due thought and a lengthy conversation with Ponikowski.

Steps were taken by Trampczynski to form a new Cabinet, but the majority favoured entrusting Ponikowski with office again; the Sejm voted in this sense by 256 votes to 164, the minority being composed of the Witos Populists, the Socialists, the Radical Populists and the Jewish deputies. But Pilsudski declined to give in; when Ponikowski presented himself to him on June 10, he was asked for full information about his policy—and forthwith he formally refused to go on with his Cabinet-making. During the next day or two Pilsudski received in succession representatives of all the groups, and instead of consulting them about forming another Government, requested them to answer a question he had put into writing, namely, What place with regard to the Sejm did the Chief of State and the "Seniors" hold respectively? Some replied that the views of the "Seniors" conveyed merely a suggestion, but others that they expressed the will of the sovereign Sejm; there was no agreement, moreover, on the question whether it was the Chief of the State or the Sejm that had the initiative in choosing the Government. On June 12 Pilsudski asked the Sejm to interpret the Third Article of the Little Constitution which stated that "The Chief of the State designates the whole Government on the basis of an understanding with the Sejm."

The Sejm remitted the subject to the Constitutional Commission, which reached no agreement and in its turn referred the matter to a Sub-Commission—with the same result; but on June 16 the Sejm in full session passed by 188 votes to 179 a resolution which read: "The initiative, so far as the nomination of the Prime Minister is concerned, belongs in principle to the

Chief of the State, but if the Chief of the State does not make a nomination or if his nominee is not accepted by the Sejm or by the organ created by it, then it is this organ which, by a majority of votes, designates the Prime Minister." The organ mentioned was an innovation; it was created on June 16, and was called the Principal Commission; it offered the Premiership two days later to Przanowski, formerly Minister of Commerce and Industry in the Witos Government and a moderate in politics. But Przanowski failed to get sufficient support. Next Witos tried his hand, but could not obtain a majority in the Sejm; finally the Principal Commission—on June 24—finding no other way out, voted unanimously that Pilsudski should be invited to exercise the initiative in the formation of a Government.

THE SLIWINSKI CABINET

In this passage at arms between the Sejm and Pilsudski it was Pilsudski who won; but the end was not yet, nor was the crisis finished. On June 26 the Chief of the State nominated as Cabinet-maker Sliwinski, a personal friend, and then Vice-President of the city of Warsaw, who immediately began negotiations with the various parties, and by June 26 he could count on the support of 226 deputies, including the Witos and Radical Populists, the Socialists, members of the National Workers Party, and the National Minorities, while the Opposition numbered 188 deputies, composed of the National Democrats and associated groups. Sliwinski's following also comprised the Galician Conservatives of the Constitutional Labour Party; they sat on the extreme Right, but did not wish to take an attitude of hostility to Pilsudski. In Sliwinski's Cabinet Narutowicz replaced Skirmunt as Foreign Minister, and Jastrzembki succeeded Michalski as Finance Minister; Sosnkowski was War Minister and Makowski Minister of Justice—these were its most important figures.

The new Government, though not yet complete, presented itself to Pilsudski on June 30, and, after its completion, to the

Seym on July 5, when Sliwinski appealed to all its parties to unite in work for the common good of the State; he declared that his foreign policy was one of peace with vigilance, and the maintenance of existing alliances, especially the alliance with France; he sharply criticized the financial policy of Michalski. His attack on the ex-Finance Minister alienated the Constitutional Labour Party from him, and on July 7 the Seym passed a vote of non-confidence in the Government by 201 votes to 195; the Cabinet at once resigned. Pilsudski accepted the resignation, and called on the Seym to appoint another Prime Minister. The crisis reached a fresh stage.

After several days of difficult negotiations the Principal Commission of the Seym nominated for the Premiership Korfanty, of Upper Silesia fame and a prominent member of the Right; he had the support of 219 votes against 205 of the deputies. When Pilsudski was informed of the decision of the Seym he sent on July 14 a letter to its Marshal, the substance of which was that the Chief of the State would rather resign than endorse the appointment of Korfanty. This statement made a great impression; the Constitutional Labour Party and the Bourgeois group withdrew their support from Korfanty. When Korfanty presented to Pilsudski the list of the names of the Ministers in his Cabinet on July 19, Pilsudski absolutely refused to sign the nominations; Korfanty insisted that he had been given a mandate by the Seym, but the defections from him had now placed him in a minority. The excitement in Parliamentary circles became extreme; both the Right and the Left carried on intemperate campaigns in their respective newspapers; the Left had gone so far as to declare a general strike, and it violently attacked Korfanty; political passion ran riot. On July 26 the Seym amid turbulent scenes discussed a motion proposed by the Right of non-confidence in Pilsudski; Witos for the Left expressed its full confidence in the Chief of the State, and eventually the motion was rejected by 205 votes to 187, the seceders from the original Korfanty block voting with the Left, who greeted the result of the division with a tremendous ovation to Pilsudski, while the Right quitted the chamber.

THE NOWAK CABINET

The Sejm revised its interpretation of the clause in the Little Constitution, and on July 29 the Principal Commission asked Pilsudski to assume the initiative.

He nominated as Premier Professor Nowak, of Cracow University, and the Principal Commission approved the selection, as did the Sejm by 240 votes to 164. The long crisis was at last at an end—in a complete victory for Pilsudski. If the struggle at the start was concerned with the Marshal's antipathy to Michalski and Skirmunt and continued for some time to have a personal aspect, it went in reality far deeper, for it became a Constitutional conflict—the Executive against the Legislative—and foreshadowed the greater Constitutional conflict of 1926 and afterwards. As regards the tendency shown by Pilsudski's line of conduct Korfanty indicated his grasp of the situation when he issued a manifesto to the nation in which, after referring to his failure despite his being supported by a majority, he invited "all friends of true Parliamentarism to unite their forces in order that the next Sejm might have a compact national majority which in future would render all non-Constitutional proceedings impossible." A compact majority, national or otherwise?—there was the trouble; for a time at any rate Nowak had one. His Cabinet, which entered into office on July 31, 1922, included Narutowicz as Foreign Minister—it was significant that he carried on the peaceful and conciliatory policy of Skirmunt, who publicly approved of him as his successor; Jastrzembski was Finance Minister, and Sosnkowski War Minister. The new Government presented itself to the Sejm on August 5 as extra-Parliamentary, but desirous of being accorded the confidence of the Sejm—which gave it by 193 votes to 139. On July 28, 1922, the Sejm passed an Electoral Law, and Nowak, in agreement with the Sejm, fixed the general election for November 5 for the Sejm, and November 12 for the Senate.

POLAND OCCUPIES HER PART OF UPPER SILESIA

While the Parliamentary crisis was at its height Poland entered into full possession of her part of Upper Silesia, the region being evacuated by the Allied and other forces, regular and irregular, and the powers of the Inter-Allied Commission coming to an end in the period June 15–July 9, 1922. Sliwinski, at the moment Prime Minister, addressed a letter on the last-named date to General Le Rond and the other commissioners thanking them on behalf of the Polish Government for the excellent work they had done. Calonder, president of the Mixed Commission, and its other members, thereafter visited Warsaw and presented themselves to the Government. On July 16, Katowice was the scene of a solemn celebration of the reunion of Upper Silesia to Poland, many of the Ministers taking part in it, among others being the Voievode (Governor or Prefect), General Szeptycki, and Trampczynski. The Voievode made a speech extolling the loyalty and patriotism of the Silesians, and handed to the Minister of the Interior, as representing the Chief of the State, fragments of coal, iron and zinc to be taken to Warsaw as signifying that "Silesia and her treasures are the property of Poland."

Pilsudski himself, however, visited Katowice on August 28, 1922, and was cordially welcomed. A dinner on this occasion gave him the opportunity of making a striking speech in which he painted a picture of the progress Poland had made in every field of endeavour. He compared the difficult beginnings of Polish independence in 1918 with the position of the country as it was when he was speaking. "In 1918, lands waste, large importations of wheat for the population starving and worn out by the War, railways and rolling stock in ruins, unemployment, no army, no munitions, the enemy on the frontiers! In 1922, not a single pound of wheat imported, but on the contrary new prospects of exports opening up; trains running normally; unemployment almost unknown! Consequently the situation justifies our best hopes." This was true, but there was a dark shadow in the background—the Polish mark was

tumbling again, and in Upper Silesia there was the additional trouble caused by the sharp fall of the German mark. To remedy the latter the Polish Government transferred to Upper Silesia five milliards of Polish money. On September 24 a general election of members of the Sejm of Upper Silesia was held; out of 48 seats the Poles carried 34 and the Germans 14; of the Poles elected 18 belonged to the National Block of Korfanty, 8 were Socialists, 7 were of the National Workers (Labour) Party, and 1 was a Populist. The Polish Press underlined the significance of the large Polish majority in Upper Silesia.

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In connexion with the foreign policy of Poland the visit paid by Pilsudski as Chief of the State to Rumania in September, 1922, was of special importance. It was a good deal more than a matter of courtesy; it was a positive affirmation of the whole Central and Eastern European policy of the Republic. On September 24 Pilsudski met King Ferdinand at Sinaia, the beautiful and romantic summer capital of the country; they dined together in the evening, and exchanged the compliments usual on such occasions. The King spoke of the ties which united the two States, and Pilsudski in his reply referred to their common interests—"which guided, guide and will guide our two lands on the same pacific road. Nothing parts us," he continued. "One could say that from the Baltic to the Black Sea there exists but one people, having two flags, but animated by the same desire for peace and liberty." Targowski, director of the Press Bureau of the Polish Foreign Ministry, who had accompanied the Marshal, said in an interview that the conversations which took place at Sinaia concerning the Little Entente, among other subjects, were very friendly. There was no truth in the report that antagonism existed between the relations of the Polish-Rumanian alliance and those of the Little Entente; on the contrary, the Little Entente supported the Polish-Rumanian alliance. Duca, Rumanian Minister of Foreign

Affairs, stated in another interview that the result of the visit was that the alliance between Poland and Rumania would be completed by economic conventions then being negotiated.

STATUTE OF AUTONOMY FOR EASTERN GALICIA

One of the things which occupied the serious attention of the Nowak Government from the outset was the elaboration of a statute dealing with the autonomy of Eastern Galicia, and it remitted the matter to a Commission of Specialists, the work of which was further facilitated by Glabinski, the leader of the Right, submitting a proposal setting forth the general principles respecting the autonomy of the *województw* (counties). After having been discussed by the Constitutional Commission the whole question was brought before the Sejm on September 26, and the Statute was voted the following day. By it Eastern Galicia was divided administratively into three autonomous wojewodies—Lwow, Stanislawov and Tarnopol—each of which was given a county *Seymik* (little Sejm or Diète) to deliberate on administrative and other affairs of local interest. In each Seymik the Central Government was represented by the voievode, who had the right to take part in the debates and of suspending them if infringing the general laws of the Republic. The Poles and Ukrainians elected their representatives separately; the Poles and Ukrainians thus elected formed each a *curia* within the Seymik, but sitting apart and discussing such matters as were of particular interest to each alone; they met together only when matters interesting to both were discussed. The respective rights of the two nationalities were guaranteed concerning languages, schools, and the distribution of posts. Two special Departments were to be created in connexion with the Ministry of Public Instruction and Cults; these were to be staffed by Ukrainians; one was to deal with questions concerning the Uniate Eastern Church (in communion with Rome, but using the Eastern Rite), and the other with public instruction in Ukrainian. Nowak described the Statute as conferring a "large autonomy on Eastern Galicia"—or "Eastern Little

Poland," as all Poles called it— "in accordance with the justice and tolerance which were the bases of Poland's policy towards her National Minorities." It was in fact an extremely liberal Statute, but it failed, of course, to satisfy the irreconcilables and all those who worked systematically in Berlin and Moscow against conciliation.

END OF FIRST SEYM

After existing for nearly four years the first or Constituent Seym came to an end on September 27, 1922. During its last sittings the financial situation was reviewed by Jastrzembki, the Finance Minister. At that time the Polish mark had not quite half of the value it possessed when the Ponikowski Government fell, about 9,000 marks now being needed to buy a dollar. The hopes raised by the legislation of 1921, which seemed successful for some months, were disappointed by the continuous subsequent fall of the mark, its instability making Budgetary calculations completely unreliable. A new stable currency was required, and this the Minister thought, quite incorrectly, to find in the *Zloty*, the value of which was put at 1,000 marks or one gold franc; the Seym authorized the zloty, as well as the issue of an internal loan at 8 per cent., the interest being payable half in marks and half in zlotys, as were the original subscriptions, one class of the bonds being for 10,000 marks *and* 10 zlotys, and the other for 50,000 marks *and* 50 zlotys. The value of the zloty could be conceived of as constant, seeing that it was supposed to have a fixed gold content—the coin itself contained 9.31 parts of a gramme of pure gold, but that came later; no one could do more than guess the true value of the mark from day to day, and in November the price of the bonds had to be adjusted to meet the increased depreciation. The loan was well subscribed, but it was soon evident that at best it was only a temporary expedient and not a remedy.

The financial situation worsened, yet it was none the less the case that the general economic situation of Poland improved enormously during 1922; an excellent harvest put fresh heart into her agriculture and industry alike; and a new factor—the

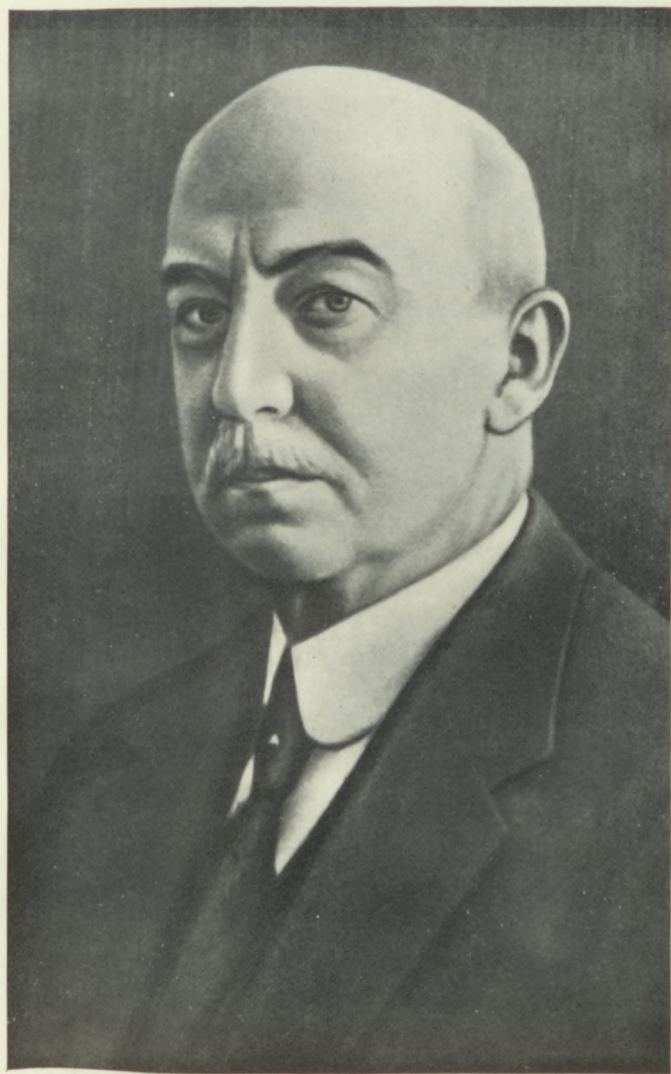
attribution to her of the larger part of industrial Upper Silesia—told or would presently tell greatly in her favour. Her relations with her neighbours were either better than or as good as they had been before. Chicherin passing through Warsaw towards the close of September had meetings with Pilsudski, Nowak and Narutowicz, and promised to implement the Treaty of Riga. In November Poland, Finland, Latvia and Estonia attended a conference on disarmament at Moscow, and on November 23 the Polish-Soviet frontiers were finally delimited. In October a friendly conference of Poland and the Baltic States was held at Reval (Tallinn). At a conference in Dresden Polish and German representatives met and discussed some of the questions that were open between their countries. On the other hand, Lithuania again demanded that the Great Allies should exercise their right to "fix the eastern frontiers of Poland," and there was trouble with Czechoslovakia over Jaworzyna.

GENERAL ELECTION, 1922

In an atmosphere of calm and peace the general election for the Sejm took place on November 5, 1922. The Nowak Government was not strong enough to put pressure on the electors, if it had wished to do so; the various political parties had free and full play, and exciting scenes, such as occur in all countries in like circumstances, were not altogether absent, but in general there were no disturbances, and good order was maintained, some Communist elements proving alone refractory. The total number of those entitled to vote was 13,109,793, and 8,760,195 went to the polls, or about 67 per cent. The Right, as a solid block, obtained 2,528,256 votes, gained 22 seats, and had 163 seats in all, but it was disappointed in not having an absolute majority. The Centre, as it had existed in the former Sejm, was practically blotted out, having only 6 seats. The Left had about 190 seats, of which the Witos Populists held 70, the Radical Populists 49 and the Socialists 41. The most striking feature of the result of the elections was the large number of seats occupied by the National Minorities—upwards of 80; it

was clear from the first that they could, if they acted together, play a decisive part in the new Sejm, a fact which was deeply resented by the Right, with its somewhat extreme nationalism. The general election for the Senate was held on November 12, 1922; the Right got 49 seats; the Centre none; and the Left 36, while the National Minorities had 26. In the Senate, as in the Sejm, the National Minorities held the balance.

It was noteworthy that the majority of the deputies in the second Sejm belonged to the *intelligentsia*, whereas the majority in the first were peasants, many of them rather illiterate, and absolutely destitute of political experience. Taking into due account the extraordinarily difficult political and economic situation of Poland during the period of the first Sejm's existence, it should be said that the Parliament did achieve a certain amount of useful work, despite the constant strife of factions and the consequent dilatoriness and fluctuations it exhibited. If Pilsudski's great experiment in founding it on the freest and most democratic franchise possible did not turn out to be the wonderful success of which perhaps he had fondly dreamed, it could not justly be charged with being an absolute failure. The bound from political servitude to political liberty was too sudden, too exciting, too dazzling; restraint, discipline, obedience—not easy to the Pole with his excess of individualism—had to be acquired. The spirit of criticism and negation had to be replaced by that of a determined and persistent collaboration in service for Poland. The years of bondage had worked into the bones of many Poles a feeling of doubt, even of hostility, to government and any Government, no matter if it was their own. As a nation the Poles had, as it were, to go to school again—to learn and to unlearn, and this was a process for which time was needed. The struggle that centred in the strong, commanding personality of Pilsudski and the Constitutional question associated with him left its mark on the first Sejm, as on those that followed it. Soldier and statesman, strange mixture of autocrat and democrat, Pilsudski filled the rôle of Teacher and Schoolmaster as well as Leader of his people. This became clearer later.



M. GABRIEL NARUTOWICZ
The First President of Poland

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SECOND SEYM MEETS

Pilsudski opened the second Sejm on November 28, 1922, by reading a message in which he recalled the opening of the first Sejm and spoke of the progress the country had made in all directions since those inspiring but anxious days. No longer were the frontiers menaced; there was peace externally, and Poland now had the opportunity of giving herself up entirely to the pacific and fruitful work of consolidating the State. Great difficulties had still to be overcome. "But," said he, "I have too much confidence in the patriotism of the nation and of its elected representatives to doubt for an instant that these difficulties will be solved and the State soon enter on a period of prosperity, thanks to the common effort of all its children." Later on the same day he opened the first session of the Senate, whose function he described as that of a moderator assuring the equilibrium of the Parliamentary institutions of the country. On December 1, 1922, Rataj, a member of the Witos Populist Party, was elected Marshal of the Sejm by 253 votes to 177—a defeat for the Right, for which, however, it received some compensation by the election of Trampczynski, Marshal of the first Sejm, as Marshal of the Senate by 56 votes to 41. The next important matter was the election of the President of the Republic. Several names had been mentioned, among them being those of Paderewski and General J. Haller. During the closing days of November some of the papers announced that Pilsudski would not be a candidate—to the general surprise; this report was soon confirmed. To a delegation of the Left which urged him to change his mind he said that the Constitution (which was now in force) did not in his opinion give the President sufficient, well-defined powers, and he could not endure an ambiguous position of that kind. In his remarks he outlined his conception of the relations that should subsist between the President on the one hand and the Government, Parliament and the army on the other. What emphasized this memorable declaration of his views respecting the Presidency was the undoubted fact that if he had chosen to stand for the office he would have been elected.

NARUTOWICZ ELECTED PRESIDENT OF POLAND

The presidential election took place on December 9 in the National Assembly, composed of the Sejm and the Senate sitting together. Five names were submitted: Zamoyski, then Polish Minister at Paris and the candidate of the Right; Wojciechowski; Professor Baudouin de Courtenay, of Warsaw University; Narutowicz; and Daszynski, the four last named being put forward by parties of the Left. On the first ballot Zamoyski received 222 votes; Wojciechowski, 105; Courtenay, 103; Narutowicz, 62; and Daszynski, 49. Five ballots were taken; Wojciechowski, Baudouin and Daszynski were eliminated; and Narutowicz was elected President by 289 votes to 227 votes for Zamoyski. It was a heavy defeat for the Right, which was infuriated because the result of the election had been brought about by the votes of the National Minorities being cast against Zamoyski. On December 11 Narutowicz took the oath of fidelity to the Constitution, and made a speech in which he rendered homage to his "illustrious predecessor Marshal Pilsudski"; he declared that he would "follow faithfully Pilsudski's policy of peace, justice and impartiality towards all Polish citizens, without distinction of origin or opinion."

Great excitement reigned in Warsaw; there were violent incidents in the streets; the Right absented itself *en bloc* from the ceremony of the oath-taking by the President; one of the Ministers of the Government resigned; the chief of the police was dismissed; next day the working classes of Warsaw organized a twelve hours' strike as a protest against the excesses of the partisans of the Right. A treacherous calm followed. On December 14 Narutowicz went to the Belvedere where Pilsudski, surrounded by the Prime Minister, the Marshals of the Sejm and the Senate, the members of the Cabinet and other dignitaries, awaited his coming, and thereafter participated in the transmission of his powers to the new Head of the State. Early in the afternoon the Marshal left the Belvedere, which had been his residence while Chief of the State; he had "handed over everything" to President Narutowicz. Imme-

diately after his installation Narutowicz received the Prime Minister, who, in accordance with the Constitution, offered the resignation of the Government.

NARUTOWICZ ASSASSINATED

But the political atmosphere was still charged with passion and hate, and two days later the President, while attending an Art Exhibition, was assassinated by three shots from a revolver fired by a Nationalist fanatic named Niewiadomski, who was arrested at once. At his trial he stated that he had long intended to strike at Pilsudski and had shot Narutowicz, since he would be only the docile instrument of Pilsudski if he lived; Niewiadomski said that he believed Pilsudski would be the ruin of Poland!

At first it was suspected that the assassination was part of a widespread conspiracy, but it appeared from the trial that the murderer, who was found guilty, sentenced to death and executed, had no accomplices and had acted entirely on his own initiative. Such a crime had never been committed before in the history of Poland; that it took place showed only too plainly to what a pitch of intensity the spirit of faction had gone. The publication abroad of the news of the President's assassination was accompanied by statements that there had been other assassinations; in the countries that did not love Poland the affair was grossly exaggerated into something approaching a revolution, with civil war impending. There certainly was some danger, but steps were promptly taken to obviate it.

THE SIKORSKI CABINET

According to the Constitution Rataj, as Marshal of the Sejm, became provisional President, and on the advice of Pilsudski he called on Sikorski, then Chief of the General Staff, to form a Government; the general accepted the task, took over the Ministry of the Interior for himself, and his vigorous measures, which included the proclamation of a state of siege (martial

law) in Warsaw, had immediately a tranquillizing effect on the general situation. Among the members of his Cabinet were Sosnkowski as Minister of War and Jastrzembski as Minister of Finance; a new appointment was that of Skrzynski, formerly Polish Minister at Bucarest, as Foreign Minister. Pilsudski was nominated Chief of the General Staff provisionally. The political and military situation was well in hand; calm and confidence were restored.

WOJCIECHOWSKI ELECTED PRESIDENT

On December 20 the National Assembly elected Wojciechowski President of Poland by 298 votes to 221 given to Professor Morawski, of Cracow University, the candidate of the Right, the majority being composed of the same parties as before.

Narutowicz had been a member of the Radical Populist Party. Like Pilsudski he was a native of Polish Lithuania, and they were distantly related to each other. By profession an engineer, he had been Professor of Hydraulic Construction at Zurich from 1908 to 1920; his long residence abroad had kept him outside the strife of parties, and he was not a keen politician, though he served as Minister of Public Works and as Foreign Minister. Wojciechowski, his successor in the Presidency, had been born in Kalisz, in former Russian Poland, and before the World War he had made his mark in Poland as a leader of the Co-operative movement. He was a member of the Witos Populist Party, though he had been a Socialist in pre-War days when he collaborated with Pilsudski on the *Robotnik*: he had been Minister of the Interior under Paderewski, and had remained a friend of Pilsudski; he was universally regarded as a worthy type of citizen, honest and capable, but not as possessed of very great strength of character.

He was as little objectionable to the Right as any member of the Left could be, and his election rather tended to ease the political situation which, however, continued to be strained, especially when the inevitable reaction after the assassination of Narutowicz had passed. He addressed a message to the

nation in which he implored the Poles to eliminate ill feeling and to build up the Republic by hard work and in accordance with the law. The most urgent needs of the country were, he said, a strong and stable Government which had the confidence of the Sejm, and a balanced Budget, the national expenditure being met out of the national income. When, according to custom, Sikorski and the Cabinet resigned, he asked them to withdraw their resignations and remain in office.

BUDGET DIFFICULTIES

After restoring order the Government was faced with the financial problem the solution of which was becoming ever more difficult. In January, 1923, it took 35,000 Polish marks to buy a dollar—twice as many as in the previous month. Late in that December Sikorski had invited all the former Finance Ministers of the Republic to attend a conference in Warsaw on January 9, 1923, under the aegis of the President, in order to draft a programme of reform. The conference was duly held; the principles of the scheme it drew up were similar to those of the 1921 programme, but the executive details were based on the experience that had been acquired, and some mistakes were thus avoided. The plan was based on the equilibrium of the Budget and the stabilization of the mark. The need was recognized of increasing the revenue, and of decreasing the expenditure at the same time; but loans were to be contracted for making up the deficiency so as to balance the Budget. It was decided to establish the Budget on the basis of a fixed monetary unit—the gold franc—and to impose a new extraordinary tax on aggregate incomes, to be paid in six equal instalments, once every six months, in 1924, 1925 and 1926, the total yield being estimated at one milliard gold francs. Agriculture was to pay 500 millions, industry and commerce 375 millions, and the other taxpayers were to find the rest, but it was provided that if the yield from these three sources should prove to be insufficient, the scale of the tax was to be increased proportionately for the three groups in order to obtain for the

State the full milliard of gold francs. General taxation was to be raised considerably.

But the mark was still the sole legal tender—and it depreciated daily; it was necessary to establish the revenues of the State in a stable currency; this was not done, however, till late in the year; by that time three Finance Ministers had tried their hand during the year at solving the problem without success, and a fourth, made financial dictator, was embarking on a desperate effort to find a way out—with the mark at six millions to the dollar! Jastrzembski resigned in January, 1923, and was succeeded on January 13 by L. Grabski. The Sejm resumed on January 16, and three days later Sikorski, addressing it in a speech of some length, said, among other things, that financial equilibrium would be assured by an increase of taxation—which, he remarked, was much lighter in Poland than in France. Further, he announced one important reform: all State undertakings, such as the railways, were to be made autonomous financially and conducted in accordance with commercial methods. But even while he was speaking the mark was slipping, slipping down; no one dreamt to what depths it would descend before it touched bottom.

POLISH FOREIGN POLICY OF PEACE

Sikorski on June 19 spoke also of the foreign policy of Poland. The assassination of Narutowicz and the tendentious stories connected with it spread abroad by hostile papers, which went so far as to say that the Republic was reproducing the "anarchy" of former days, had at first caused some disquiet in Western countries, but the thoroughly effective way of the Government's handling of the situation quickly dispelled all apprehensions. Poland was at peace within herself. She desired, said the Prime Minister, the maintenance and the consolidation of peace in Europe on the basis of law and respect for existing treaties—that was the unchangeable foreign policy of the State. Poland wished not only to consolidate but to enlarge the alliance with France; their fraternity would contribute greatly to the

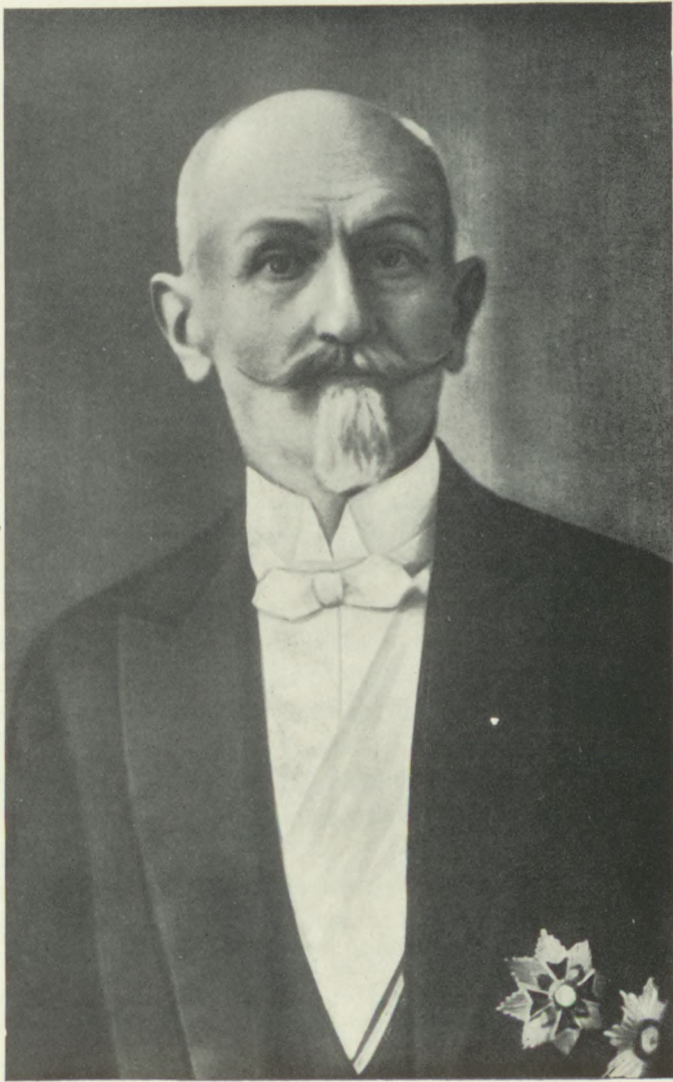
consolidation of European equilibrium. Then, with the Ruhr and the consequent conflict between France and England in the thoughts of himself and the Sejm, he went on: "The guarantees of that equilibrium consist in a close union between France and England, and its maintenance is a direct interest of Poland, who, for her part, will work to improve her relations with England, in the hope that in the future course of international events England will come to appreciate the importance of Poland as a factor making for stability in the East." At the close of his remarks he said: "Poland offers to the other Powers her sincere co-operation in the stabilization of the equilibrium of Europe, above all in the domain of the League of Nations." Among other topics he referred to the alliance with Rumania and the desire for good relations with the Little Entente; he deplored that relations with Lithuania were still not normal, and he stated that Poland had lodged a protest with the Ambassadors' Conference against the "violation of Memel." After a long debate on the Governmental declaration the Sejm passed a vote of confidence on the Sikorski administration by 320 votes to 110; this immense majority appeared to be conclusive of the solidity of the Government's position, but disintegration set in before many weeks elapsed, the second Sejm manifesting the same political instability as the first.

MEMEL QUESTION

After remaining in the background for more than three years the question of Memel thrust itself to the front by the occupation of the port and the surrounding district by a force of Lithuanian partisans on January 10-15, 1923. By Article 99 of the Versailles Treaty Germany renounced Memel in favour of the Allies, and an Inter-Allied Commission, presided over by a French representative, was in charge of the town and district, as a provisional arrangement. The Allies had been in no hurry to settle the question of its attribution, probably because of the preponderantly German nationality of the territory; Lithuania laid claim to it, however, on nationalist, and even

more on economic grounds, Memel being her only possible outlet to the sea; Poland opposed Lithuania's claim, because the port, if the natural maritime outlet for Lithuania, was also the natural outlet for the Polish territory lying in the basin of the Niemen—and the hostility of Lithuania to Poland was well known. Besides Poland more than suspected that Germany and the Soviet were behind Lithuania. On January 19 a meeting held at Heydekrug in Memel territory declared for the union of Memelland, as an autonomous region, with Lithuania, the Sejm of which, four days afterwards, authorized the Lithuanian Government to effect this union, a proceeding which caused a great commotion in Poland and brought, somewhat tardily, the Ambassadors' Conference into action, a Commission of Inquiry being dispatched to Memel. On February 16, 1923, the Ambassadors' Conference decided to constitute an autonomous district of Memel under the sovereignty of Lithuania, on condition that the economic interests of Poland were safeguarded in the Statute governing the case.

Another phase of the Polish-Lithuanian controversy was reached when the Council of the League of Nations on February 3, 1923, came to a final recommendation respecting fixing the line of demarcation between Poland and Lithuania in the neutral zone which had been in existence for more than two years; the Council described this line in detail. The Lithuanian delegate declared that Lithuania would oppose this decision by all the means in her power. Some days later the Polish Government requested the Ambassadors' Conference to fix the eastern frontiers of Poland, in accordance with Article 87 of the Versailles Treaty; as already noted, the Lithuanian Government had made several requests to the same effect during the preceding year. On March 14, 1923, the Ambassadors' Conference decided to recognize the line fixed by the Council of the League as the frontier of Poland and Lithuania. Lithuania solemnly protested and said she would not accept the decision, though she had repeatedly asked for a decision—under the reservation, apparently, that if it did not fall in with her views, she would reject it! Poland, satisfied that the recommendation of the



M. STANISLAS WOJCIECHOWSKI
The Second President of Poland

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Council of the League would be adopted by the Ambassadors, began to take possession of her share of the neutral zone on February 15; Lithuanian irregulars made some resistance, but no serious fighting occurred. The Lithuanian Government asserted that Polish troops had passed across the line into the territory assigned to it, but this was disproved. Fishing as usual in troubled waters, the Soviet offered its mediation—to which Skrzynski, the Polish Foreign Minister, replied that he could not see that the Soviet had any standing in the matter.

POLAND'S EASTERN FRONTIERS FIXED

The fixation by the Ambassadors' Conference on March 14, 1923, of Poland's eastern frontiers included the frontier with Soviet Russia; the Ambassadors recognized the frontier traced by the Treaty of Riga—it had been finally delimited, as already recorded, on November 23, 1922. The news of the decision was received with great rejoicing in Poland. On March 19 a *Te Deum* was sung by Cardinal Kakowski in the cathedral at Warsaw, in presence of President Wojciechowski, the members of the Government and many distinguished people. Great joy was manifested in Vilna and Lwow, the Vilna question and the Eastern Galicia question being definitively settled. The President gave a dinner to the Ministers of the Allies at Warsaw, to whom he expressed the gratitude of Poland, who, he said, would be a faithful guardian of peace in Eastern Europe. Sikorski spoke in a similar sense in the Sejm, amid much applause. Skrzynski, the Foreign Minister, was then at Paris, and to a representative of the *Journal des Débats* he said that the decision of the Ambassadors secured not only the future peace of Poland but of the world. Asked by another journalist what he thought of the occupation of the Ruhr, Skrzynski replied that Poland could not but applaud a measure the object of which was to carry out the Versailles Treaty, and show the world that France intended to have her just claims satisfied. The protocol respecting the fixation of the eastern frontiers

was signed on March 15, 1923, at the Quai d'Orsay by Poincaré for France, Phipps for England, Avezzana for Italy and Matsuda for Japan; Zamoyski, Polish Ambassador in Paris, signed the document in token of Poland's acceptance of the decision.

GDYNIA BEGUN

Poland's debt to France for munitions was liquidated at this time by a loan from France of 400 million francs (afterwards reduced to 300 millions). An internal loan in the shape of Treasury bonds for fifty million zlotys at 6 per cent. was issued in April, the value of the zloty being put at 8,000 marks. Relief was but temporary, and the fall of the mark was not arrested. Despite her financial difficulties Poland was able to vote funds towards the building of a port of her own on the part of the Baltic littoral which had been assigned to her. The creation of this port, called Gdynia, was dictated mainly by her economic necessities, but it also clearly had a political bearing. The port of Danzig alone was not enough for the assured growth of her maritime trade and commerce, but the constant disputes in which the exaggerated Germanism of the Danzigers involved her—the League of Nations was frequently the theatre of these controversies—and the fact that Danzig could not properly be a Polish naval port, could scarcely fail to impart to Gdynia a certain political significance. In the past when Poland had been in her prime Danzig had been a great Polish port, but the Poles themselves had not been a seafaring people. Far-sighted Poles in 1920-21—chief among them Julius Rummel—were urging on their countrymen that in Poland's new position it was necessary for them to look to the sea to ensure full national prosperity. A training ship was stationed in Danzig waters in 1921. Polish and foreign experts chose Gdynia as the best site for a port, and some preliminary work was done. In the course of an official tour of Pomerania President Wojciechowski visited Gdynia on April 29, 1923, accompanied by Sikorski, several other Ministers, and the Marshals of the

Seym and the Senate, and saw the beginnings of the enterprise—which the Danzigers ridiculed, unwisely, as the next few years were to prove.

In the spring of 1923 Polish politics underwent a remarkable change by the undermining of the combination of the parties in the Seym on which the Sikorski Government really rested. Till March the Government, though constantly attacked by the Right, had held its ground well, but in that month the Witos Populists who had supported Sikorski began to show indications of wobbling, some members of the group inclining to the Right, others more decidedly to the Left, the tendency on the whole being to the Right. This became pronounced when on March 18 and 19 the result of several meetings under Witos was a series of resolutions hostile to the Government, the gist of these being that Poland should not be governed by her National Minorities, though it was expressed less crudely. The majority of the Government in the Seym was composed of the Left and the National Minorities; the Right had all along maintained that there should be a purely Polish majority in Parliament governing the country, and this view no doubt appealed to Witos and other moderate Populists. Besides, some of the deputies of the National Minorities were accused, apparently with good reason, of treasonable activities against the State; two White Russians were charged with high treason, as was also a Ukrainian deputy; when their arrests were being discussed in the Seym, the Witos group supported the Right, which showed how things were moving. The Populists were also given to understand by the Right that their adhesion to it would be followed by an enforcement of the Agrarian Reform Law, which so far had been almost a dead letter. Negotiations took place openly at Cracow in April between Witos and other leading Populists on the one side and Korfanty, Glabinski and other members of the Right on the other. After several days' discussion a common programme on internal and external policy was drawn up, but action in the Seym was postponed in view of the forthcoming visit to Poland of Marshal Foch.

MARSHAL FOCH VISITS POLAND

Foch crossed the frontier on May 2, was welcomed by Sosnkowski on behalf of the Polish Government, and presented with the baton of a marshal of the Polish Army in the name of President Wojciechowski. He proceeded to Czestochowa, one of the Holy Places of Poland, and visited the convent of Jasnagora, celebrated for its resistance to the Swedish invasion in the seventeenth century. He then went on to Warsaw, where he was met at the station by Sikorski and Pilsudski, the chiefs of the Allied Military Missions, and many other people of position. Next day he attended a great review of troops in connexion with the inauguration by the President of a statue of Poniatowski, the Polish marshal of Napoleon. In the evening he was the guest of honour at a banquet given by Sikorski, who, when toasting him, prefaced his speech by addressing him as "Marshal of France, Great Britain and Poland," and referred to him as representing "our sister France." Foch spent nearly the whole of May 5 with Pilsudski discussing military matters. Two days later he was in Poznan, returned to Warsaw for a rest, and next visited Lwow and Cracow, recrossing the frontier on May 13. No man ever received a warmer welcome in Poland. During his visit he had seen a good deal of the Polish Army, and he expressed his satisfaction with it. In the last speech he made he said that he would bend all his efforts to consolidate still further the Franco-Polish Alliance. Evidently Foch had been favourably impressed. Some days after his departure from Poland Warsaw was visited by Lord Cavan, Chief of the British General Staff, and other British officers; they too saw something of the Polish Army, and Cavan said he would report to Lord Derby, then Minister of War, how profound an impression it had made upon him.

SECOND WITOS CABINET

These pleasant interludes past, the strife of parties began again in Poland. On May 26 the Sikorski Government was overthrown in the Seym on a question of credits by 278 votes to 116, the

great majority of the Witos Populists voting against the Government and upwards of 60 deputies of the National Minorities—Jews, Germans, Ukrainians and White Russians—going the same way. The supporters of the Government included the Radical Populists, the Socialists, the National Workers, and 14 Populists, under Dabski, who had declined to associate themselves with Witos. The Sikorski Government immediately resigned, and Wojciechowski, after consulting the leaders of the Right and of the Witos Populists, called on Witos to form a Government—which he did on May 28, 1923, with himself as Prime Minister; M. Seyda, as Foreign Minister; L. Grabski, as Finance Minister; Glabinski, as Minister of Public Instruction; and General A. Osinski, as Minister of War. On June 1 Witos made a declaration of his policy in the Sejm; he began by stating that the Government had the support of a purely Polish majority, but the Cabinet did not regard itself as a party one, and was far from taking up a chauvinistic attitude towards the National Minorities. Foreign policy would continue, he said, on the same lines as before. Concerning Great Britain he remarked "with joy that for some time past the relations between England and Poland had been developing very favourably, a fact to which the Polish Government attached primordial importance, and it sought to consolidate and enlarge them in every way, notably in the economic domain." Domestic policy, he stated, would be concerned with Budget equilibrium, agrarian reform and the extension of legislation in favour of the working classes. The Sejm passed a vote of confidence in the new Government by 226 votes to 171, the figures showing already a change against it of some 50 votes as compared with those when the Sikorski Government was turned out, but it still could claim to have an absolute majority in Parliament.

PILSUDSKI RESIGNS FROM THE ARMY

By far the most striking result of the installation of the Witos Government—the second Witos administration—and the coming into power of the Right was the resignation by Pilsudski

on May 29 of the posts of Chief of the General Staff and President of the Superior War Council, which he had held under the Sikorski Government, and his decision to leave the army altogether and retire into private life. He was under no illusions with respect to the hostility of the Witos Government, and the action of Witos himself, who in the general election had figured as his supporter, in forming an alliance with his bitterest enemies filled him with disgust. "Serve under such people!" cried the Marshal; "Never!" No doubt, too, the hard work he had done during the preceding years, and the persistent attacks on him of the Right in the papers, pamphlets and books inspired and directed by it, had told upon him. His resignation as Chief of the General Staff was immediately accepted, and General S. Haller was his successor. Szeptycki, one of his adversaries, became Minister of War, Osinski having held the post temporarily. On June 28 the Sejm, at the instance of the Witos Government, who did not wish to drive the Marshal too far, passed a resolution, by 162 votes to 88, the rest of the deputies abstaining, to the effect that "Joseph Pilsudski, both as Chief of the State and as Commander-in-Chief, has rendered meritorious service to the Nation." Some days later Parliament awarded him a pension for life of about £600 a year, equal to the salary of a Prime Minister. He never spent the money on himself or his family. He had never used his position to benefit himself financially, and when he retired he was penniless; he had always lived simply, not to say hardly, and he continued to do so. He maintained himself at Sulejowek by his pen.

On July 2, at the close of a discussion in the Superior War Council, Pilsudski announced his final decision to quit the army. Next day his political friends and his admirers entertained him at a banquet in Warsaw; to the toast of his health he replied in a speech the language of which was memorable in the light of what took place some three years afterwards. He insisted that "moral values" were at stake in the political struggle that was going on in Poland. "The Republic," he said, "is returning to the bad habits of former days, and great efforts will be needed to make it re-enter the road of moral renewal."

As if to give point to these efforts, he wore on this occasion his old Legion uniform; he affirmed that he had regained his liberty in order to play an active political rôle. On August 6 the Marshal presided over the annual congress of the legionaries which was held that year at Lwow, and he delivered speeches in praise of the Polish soldier at Vilna and elsewhere; but he devoted most of his time to writing memoirs of his friend Narutowicz and articles, some of which appeared in the *Kurjer Polski*. In the Sejm his sympathizers made it as difficult as they could for Witos, but his enemies, and they were numerous, rejoiced in his downfall and said that his day was over. However, the army still regarded him as its chief, and Pilsudski quietly but none the less closely kept in touch with it.

RUMANIAN SOVEREIGNS IN WARSAW

Accompanied by I. Bratianu, Prime Minister, and Duca, Foreign Minister, of Rumania, King Ferdinand and Queen Marie returned the visit which Pilsudski, as Chief of the State, had paid to Rumania during 1922. The Rumanian sovereigns arrived in Warsaw on June 24, and were received with enthusiasm, the importance of the alliance of Poland and Rumania being emphasized. Next day the King and Queen were present at a great review of the troops in Warsaw and, the day following, saw impressive military manœuvres at the Rembertow camp. After visiting Cracow and Lwow they returned home on June 29. In that month the Witos Government was shaken by the continued financial crisis, one result being the resignation of Grabski and his replacement as Finance Minister by Linde, who, after various ineffective measures, was succeeded by Kucharski on September 1. Negotiations for loans abroad were not successful, and the situation did not improve. In the course of the summer and autumn several strikes occurred among the workers because of the continuous rise in the cost of living; these increased the difficulties of the Government; the catastrophic daily tumble-tumble of the German mark reacted unfavourably on the Polish mark; in spite of all, the Government preserved an

optimistic front, abolished Ministries, reduced the number of functionaries, and made other economies, while striving at the same time to check speculation and to control prices. The capital levy, already mentioned, was imposed. In October the Government invited Hilton Young, an English financial expert, to act as its financial adviser, and he got to work without delay. The situation, as in Germany, grew worse. Yet it was not the calamitous fall of the mark that brought about the fall of the Witos Government some weeks later; it was a question of domestic politics.

WITOS OVERTHROWN

The Sejm resumed on October 9, 1923. Witos made a statement in which he admitted that the political and economic restoration of the country was difficult, but asserted that persevering work would accomplish it. On October 17 the Sejm passed a vote of confidence in the Government by 208 votes to 197—a much reduced majority. At the end of the month Korfanty was brought into the Cabinet as Vice-Premier and Dmowski became Foreign Minister in place of Seyda, who was relegated to an Under-Secretaryship, the evident intention being to strengthen the Government by the inclusion of these Chiefs of the Right. A few days previously a quarter of a million workers had gone on strike at Lodz; there were strikes elsewhere; a general strike was proclaimed at Cracow on October 27, but was not put in force throughout the country till November 5-6; serious rioting occurred at Cracow. The situation was growing desperate. Meanwhile in the Sejm politics centred once more on the question of agrarian reform, towards the solution of which Witos had done something by creating in July, 1923, a Ministry of Agrarian Reform and by passing legislation looking to the carrying out in a modified form of the Agrarian Reform Act of 1920. Not a few of Witos's own followers disapproved of his action as not radical enough; this in the end precipitated a crisis which was fatal to the Government, and on December 14 Witos resigned.

CHAPTER VII

FINANCIAL RESTORATION AND RELAPSE

1924-1925

I

NOT since 1920 had Poland experienced so critical a situation; then, the menace had come from without; now, it came from within; she faced the crisis of 1924 with as great courage as that shown in 1920. Five years had passed since the liberation of the country, and during that short period no fewer than eleven Governments had had their brief and troubled day; nearly all of them had been extra-Parliamentary, and all of them had been more or less the sport of faction. With the resignation of Witos in December, 1923, the first Government in the history of the new free Poland which had enjoyed a good working majority in the Sejm came to an end—wrecked by party strife, as the others had been. Having accepted the resignation of the Witos Government President Wojciechowski invited Thugutt, the chief of the Radical Populists, to form a Ministry; after two days spent in fruitless efforts Thugutt informed the President of his lack of success. But the feeling among the groups was that the crisis was not one that could be dealt with competently by the Sejm. Wojciechowski next called on L. Grabski, who on December 18, 1923, was able to constitute a Cabinet—but again it was a Government of an extra-Parliamentary character. Grabski himself became Prime Minister and Finance Minister; Sosnkowski was Minister of War; another outstanding figure was Zamoyski, then Polish Minister at Paris, who was appointed Foreign Minister.

SECOND GRABSKI CABINET

When the new Government presented itself to the Sejm on December 20, 1923, Grabski told the deputies that the principal task of himself and his colleagues, as of the country, was the

restoration of the financial situation; until it was achieved the Government must be given plenary powers in the domain of finance. The Seym, well aware that it had failed, was acquiescent and ready to abdicate as required by Grabski; it accepted his declaration by 193 votes to 76 on December 22, the opposition coming entirely from the National Minority groups. Parliament adjourned till after the holidays. Meanwhile the mark continued its fall and the cost of living its rise. The crisis searched the pockets of everybody; naturally it bore most heavily on the poorer members of the community, the workers and the peasants, among whom discontent and unrest were rife. But it affected the whole nation.

ITS FINANCIAL PROBLEM

Put briefly, the problem to be solved by the Government was to balance the Budget in the face of a mountainous Treasury deficit. It was some time before the real source of the trouble had been recognized. Linde, when Finance Minister, had described the situation of Poland financially as paradoxical. The country, he said, prospered economically, production increased, exports augmented and often exceeded imports, a rising curve was shown by metals and minerals, and many industries had attained their pre-War standard—yet the mark persistently diminished in value! It was a paradox that puzzled many Poles. Among the explanations current of the fall of the mark were the hostile action of enemies of Poland; the fall of the German mark and its reactions on Polish commerce and industry; and the unprincipled machinations of speculators in foreign exchange. None of these explanations hit the truth, which was that the real cause was inflation of the currency, the printing and issuing of notes by the Government to make up deficiencies in its income and the consequent impoverishment of everyone concerned. In his *Report on Financial Conditions in Poland*, which was submitted to Grabski in February, 1924, Hilton Young observed:

What the Government gains when it manufactures currency to cover its deficits it does not draw down from the clouds, or squeeze out of

the printing press with the fresh notes. It gets it from the people of the country. . . . It is broadly true to say that when a Government is living on inflation it is living on the capital of the country. That is what has been going on in Poland. The country has been living on its capital. Capital is the necessary raw material of industry. Ever more and more restricted in its supplies of that raw material, industry has been increasingly depressed. It has felt the pressure of inflation both in the dwindling of its working capital and in the lack of supplies for fresh investment; it has felt it in the increased bill for wages and in the collapsed exchange. Wage-earners have felt the pressure in more unemployment and short time. The middle classes have felt it in prices rising in comparison with their incomes. The agricultural population feel it when they see the time approaching at which their distrust of the currency will make it no longer worth while to produce more than they require for their own needs. The mischief has gone so far that it could not have gone much farther without a catastrophe. Poland is grappling with her financial difficulties just in time. Were inflation to continue, the country would before long find itself in a state of economic paralysis.

Such teaching and preaching had been needed in Poland—though of course not in Poland alone; Germany provided a far bigger instance of the same thing. The various attempts which had been made by Polish Governments to retrieve the situation had been ineffective. Taxation had been increased—but not enough; expenditure had been lowered—but not enough; the zloty had been introduced—but in terms of the unstable mark and had itself therefore no stability; insufficient loans had been raised—and so on. The situation worsened, as was inevitable. A real step towards a solution of the crisis that went on developing in severity was the passing of an Act on December 6, 1923—one of the last things done by the Witos Government—which placed on a gold basis or “valorized” all imposts, Customs, taxes, railway and postal tariffs, as well as the credits granted by the State and other public authorities. Under this Act the State made and received payment in marks according to the official rate of the gold franc which was published daily by the Finance Minister in correlation with the price of gold in London and the pound sterling in Warsaw. The principles of the programme of reform had been enunciated in the beginning of 1923, but the ineffectiveness of the Sejm had

been demonstrated in this, as in other affairs, by the dilatoriness of the legislation needed to give effect to them. The Sejm continued under the Constitution to be the Executive power, the supreme authority, but it had to recognize its abject failure in the field of finance, a failure that was emphasized when in January, 1924, the mark fell 50 per cent. farther, nine and a quarter million marks being then the price of the dollar.

GRABSKI FINANCIAL DICTATOR

It was not too much to say that the Sejm was panic-stricken, and on January 11, 1924, it passed, on the demand of the Government, an Act giving the Finance Minister plenary powers in financial matters; in effect, the Sejm made Grabski financial dictator of the State, the only dissentients to this proceeding being, as before, the National Minority groups. The aim of the Act was defined as the "restoration of the Treasury of the State and the reform of the monetary system." To realize these objects the Act envisaged increased taxation and its enforced collection; sweeping economies in State administration which were "indispensable to avoid a Budgetary deficit"; the transference from the State to the local authorities of certain expenditures which more properly belonged to the latter; the raising of loans up to a half-milliard of gold francs on special guarantees; the sale, up to a value of a hundred million gold francs, of certain commercial and industrial undertakings that had hitherto been conducted by the State; the reorganization of the banking institutions of the State; the establishment of a new monetary system, with a stable value to the zloty, which was to cause the permanent suppression of the mark; the creation of a Bank of Issue and the liquidation of the *Polska Krajowa Kasa Pożyczkowa* (Polish State Loan Bank); and the conversion and consolidation of former loans and other State obligations. The Act applied to the whole of Poland, and came into force on the day of its publication.

BUDGET BALANCED

In connexion with this drastic programme of reform it should be recalled that the capital levy, designed to yield the equivalent of a milliard gold francs, remained in operation on a spread-over of three years. The Polish people were called on to make great sacrifices, and they made them. Grabski took prompt action. By estimating the Budget for periods of one month, he was able to supervise each detail of the financial situation, and his energy was such that the Budget was balanced as from February 1, 1924; on the same date inflation was decidedly checked by a decree suppressing the issue of marks. Meanwhile he was working for a new monetary or currency system and the formation of the new Bank of Issue. On April 14, 1924, an important part of his programme was carried out by a decree establishing the zloty as the sole monetary unit with the fixed value of the Swiss franc, which had retained its old value in relation to the dollar; the official ratio between the mark and the zloty was established at 1,800,000 marks to one zloty; the two units circulated together till July 1, 1924, when the zloty became sole legal tender. On April 15 another decree confirmed the statutes of the *Bank Polski* (Bank of Poland) as the Bank of Issue; it was a private joint stock bank, the shares of which were taken up by public subscription; its capital was a hundred million zlotys (raised in October, 1927, to one hundred and fifty million zlotys), and it had the exclusive right of issuing banknotes. It opened for business on April 28, 1924, a date which thenceforward was of national significance.

THE BANK OF POLAND

The decree dealing with the establishment of a Bank of Issue had been published on January 20, 1924. The Government stated that it would reserve 25 per cent. of the share capital for itself, but it reduced the amount to 10 per cent. because more than the whole capital was publicly subscribed; from industry came 33 per cent., from agriculture 8 per cent., from co-opera-

tive societies 8 per cent., from banks 17 per cent., from commerce 5 per cent., from Government officials 17 per cent. and the remainder from other sources. The share capital was paid entirely in gold, foreign currencies or foreign exchange. The exclusive right to issue banknotes was conferred on the Bank for forty years, subject to extension. For its notes in circulation there had to be a cover of 30 per cent. in gold or foreign exchange; 70 per cent. had to be covered in its entirety by bills of exchange possessing the requisite guarantees and by reserves of metal currency estimated at its gold value. The Bank was not obliged to exchange its notes for gold, but this was provided for in principle. In return for its monopoly of the issue of notes the Bank had to grant the State a credit of fifty million zlotys. Part of the business of the institution was the liquidation of the Polish State Loan Bank, and the taking over, on behalf of the State, of the assets remaining after liabilities had been discharged. Also on behalf of the State the Bank undertook to exchange marks, the maximum issue of which had reached nearly 600,000,000 millions on March 3, 1924, for zlotys on the basis mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the number of zlotys required for the operation being about 317,000,000. During the first three months of its existence the Bank exchanged for zlotys upwards of 90 per cent. of the marks that had been in circulation, the rest being exchangeable till the close of 1925.

To help matters out the Government was authorized to mint gold coins—100, 50, 20 and 10 zlotys pieces—to any extent required; silver coins—5, 2 and 1 zlotys pieces—up to the equivalent of 8 zlotys *per capita*; and nickel and bronze coins in groszy—100 to the zloty—up to the value of 4 zlotys *per capita*. Until the small coinage was manufactured the Finance Minister was empowered to issue corresponding fractional currency notes, exchangeable later for the metal coins or for Bank of Poland notes. Fractional currency notes and small coins came to play a considerable part in Government finance later—temporarily, though not ultimately, to its advantage.

FINANCIAL REFORMS

Among other reforms was the commercialization of the railways, which had been running at a loss entailing heavy subsidies from the State. The railways were thoroughly reorganized and placed on a self-supporting basis; the management was improved, staffs were reduced and tariffs revised. Further, the whole administration of the State itself was simplified; superfluous services and offices were eliminated, one entire Ministry—Posts and Telegraphs—was suppressed (it was revived, however, in 1927); and a general policy of staff reduction was carried out—a process that, beginning as far back as 1921, resulted in a reduction in all of some 40,000 officials—in itself a very great economy. A first payment on the score of the capital levy fell due early in 1924 and materially assisted the revenue, which was also substantially augmented by increasing the land tax, the income tax and the industrial tax. In the past the collection of taxes had always been difficult, especially in view of the instability of the mark; the definitive fixation in value of the zloty currency and the withdrawal of the mark clarified the position, but the new taxes, which had to be paid in cash, were a heavy burden; it was not made lighter by the economic crisis which supervened on the stabilization of the exchange and the currency reform.

Inflation had been going on for three years, and had, as already indicated, a profound influence on the whole economic life of the country. For some time it seemed to favour the reconstruction and development alike of agriculture and industry, with the result of a remarkable expansion in production; and the depreciation of the currency, by maintaining home prices at a lower level than those of the world markets, assisted exportation. The depreciation of the currency had also the effect of stimulating the demand for goods which represented real and more or less stable values; the public rushed to buy goods before prices rose, a process relatively much slower than the fall of the mark; in other words, goods were accumulated instead of currency, as that appeared to be the more profitable

proceeding. With the stabilization of the currency the situation changed completely. Goods were abundant, money was lacking; supply far outran demand. It was discovered that real working capital had ceased to exist, that credit and savings had both been destroyed. Wages and costs did not fall, but rose in general, and industrial production greatly diminished. Neither did the cost of living fall, particularly in the cities and industrial centres. Unemployment vastly increased. On top of all these things there came in that year 1924 a bad harvest. In brief, the Polish people, on passing from inflation to deflation, had to face the same sort of difficulties as confronted the people of other lands in much the same circumstances, with the additional drawback of poor crops that year in the case of Poland. It was a most discouraging economic situation, and it was not surprising that in the end it defeated revenue expectations. But that was not evident till later in 1924, and for some months the Grabski programme had so prosperous an appearance that its author was the object of almost universal congratulations. Not only were the shares of the Bank of Poland oversubscribed, but a Loan to establish the railways on an independent footing was taken up by the public. The *moral* of the nation was strong and still confident. At the start the Sejm had entrusted Grabski with plenary powers for six months; at the end of that period it willingly gave him the same powers for another six months.

THE STATE BANKS

Part of the Grabski programme was the reorganization or creation of banks of a State character, and the economic situation stressed the need for carrying it out. Thus the State Agrarian Bank, which had its roots in the Polish State Land Bank, was reorganized by decree on May 14, 1924, one of its chief functions being the financing of the agrarian reform, and another the granting of credits to landowners and peasants. Its capital was provided mainly by the State. Another institution, the National Economic Bank, was established by decree on May 30, 1924, and in it were merged several Government credit institutions. Its

business was to grant long-term credits and loans by means of mortgage debentures, and municipal and railway bonds and shares; to co-operate with and support municipal banking institutions; to encourage building and reconstruction throughout the country; and to transact ordinary banking, with special reference to assisting State and municipal undertakings. The capital of this bank came primarily from Treasury grants, but for its long-term advances the bank depended on obtaining foreign money by the selling of bonds and debentures in the United States and elsewhere abroad. Another State institution, the Post Office Savings Bank, was reorganized, and its progress was assisted by currency stabilization.

Revenue was obtained through internal loans: Treasury bonds and notes at 5 and 6 per cent.; and lottery bonds at 5 per cent. in dollars which yielded about eight million zlotys by May 1, 1924. The Government also raised a loan of 400 million lire at 7 per cent., redeemable in twenty years, for the introduction of the Tobacco Monopoly, and guaranteed on the revenue from the monopoly. This loan, which was floated by an Italian bank at Milan, was oversubscribed eleven times.

THE NATIONAL MINORITIES

While the Grabski Government was carrying out with energy and courage its programme of financial restoration and currency reform during the first half of 1924, it was much less embarrassed by party strife in the Sejm than had been most preceding Governments. But it had been given plenary powers only in the domain of finance, and the two great questions of the putting into force of the agrarian reform and of the National Minorities had still to be dealt with; the latter was the more urgent, for not only was it a disturbing factor in the internal life of the country, but it also affected the external relations of the State, chiefly in and through the League of Nations. At that time Poland was not a member of the Council, and her interests at Geneva were taken care of by a representative, who during the second half of 1923 and the first half of 1924 was

Skirmunt, then Polish Minister at London. The Minorities Treaty of 1919, to which Poland had subscribed, had in effect constituted the League guardian of the National Minorities; the League had besides before it the Memel question and Danzig; and it had been appealed to in the Jaworzyna dispute between the Poles and the Czechoslovaks.

The last-named matter had been decided against Poland by The Hague International Court in December, 1923; it was got completely out of the way when a protocol was signed by Poland and Czechoslovakia at Cracow on March 6, 1924. The liquidation of this quarrel removed the sole remaining obstacle to entirely friendly relations between the two States, a condition of things which had no doubt been facilitated by the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty signed some weeks earlier in Paris, the object of that treaty being mutual security and the maintenance of the Peace Treaties—a *sine qua non* for Poland as for Czechoslovakia. The Memel question was decided against Poland.

LITHUANIA GETS MEMEL

In December, 1923, the Council of the League had sent to Memel a commission, headed by an American, to investigate and report on the situation. The commission submitted its report and a draft convention to the Council which it approved in March, 1924. This convention, which was accepted by the Great Allies, differed substantially from the draft agreement proposed by the Ambassadors' Conference in July, 1923; under it Poland was to have a free zone in the port of Memel and the freedom of the Niemen as a waterway, as well as a share in the control of the port; but Lithuania had refused to accept it, and the Ambassadors had remitted the whole business to the League, with the above result. The main points of the convention adopted by the Council were that the Lithuanian Government should study the possibility of abolishing duties on the import and export of timber before May 1, 1925—Poland wanted free floatage of logs on the Niemen; that all foreigners residing in Memel and its territory must conform to Lithuanian law—

Poles were to have no special privileges; and that a Port Council was to be created comprising a Lithuanian, a native of Memel and a delegate of the League of Nations. Vilna, the chief town in the Polish hinterland of Memel, protested; the Sejm protested, but in vain. On May 8, 1924, Lithuania signed the convention, which practically conferred on her sovereign rights over Memel and its territory. A month later the Ambassadors' Conference called on Poland and Lithuania to negotiate a *modus vivendi* with respect to the Niemen; Poland was willing, but Lithuania held aloof, and clamoured for Vilna, though as Skirmunt had told the Lithuanian representative at Geneva during the Memel discussions, the Vilna question no longer existed from the international point of view—it was definitively settled. In England the view was expressed in some quarters that the attribution of Memel to Lithuania should be accepted by her as full compensation for whatever claims she might have had in Vilna, but this opinion found no echo in Lithuania.

NATIONAL MINORITIES EXPLOITED AGAINST POLAND

In the nature of things the question of the National Minorities was incapable of any quick solution, either by the League of Nations or any particular State affected by it. Poland had large National Minorities within her territory; there were large Polish Minorities in other lands. If there was any real solvent, apart from common interests, it was time alone. As it was, the question affected Poland's relations with Germany and Soviet Russia, including Soviet White Russia and Soviet Ukraina, and in less measure with Lithuania, as well as Czechoslovakia. Of the four the last named was the only State not immitigably hostile to Poland; the three other States were ready to injure her as much as possible by propaganda or any weapon that in the circumstances of the time appeared likely to produce the desired result. Such a weapon was the question of the National Minorities in Poland herself and in the League. In Poland the *Kresy* gave an easy opening for the intrigues of the Third International,

the instrument, scarcely concealed, of Soviet attack. During 1921-23 there had been disorder and agitation in these regions; it came out that the unrest that ensued was financed from Moscow. In Western Poland the German Minority had greatly declined, and German propaganda asserted that this emigration had been compulsory, though it had most certainly been voluntary in very large measure; the former German officials had cleared out, and other Germans with short roots in the country or no roots at all had returned home; there probably were others who could not endure living in Poland where they were no longer top-dogs.

BY GERMANY

Late in December, 1923, the Council of the League of Nations had before it the case of German colonists who had been expelled from Poland, and after reviewing a report from a special committee of inquiry, it decided, against the Polish contention, that these colonists were entitled to indemnities. The German Government expelled from the Reich a certain number of its Polish citizens; the Polish Government retaliated by applying similar treatment to an equal number of its German citizens, the upshot being that the Poles who had been expelled from Germany also received indemnities. In March, 1924, the Council considered certain difficulties arising out of claims to Polish nationality in Upper Silesia, a natural hotbed of strife between Germans and Poles, invited the Polish and German Governments to negotiate respecting the matter, and failing a successful issue, to have recourse to the mediation of the president of the Arbitral Tribunal of Upper Silesia. On March 25, 1924, the German Government sent a Note to the Polish Government complaining of the treatment of the German Minority in Polish Upper Silesia. The Polish Government replied that in conformity with her Constitution Poland accorded to all her citizens, irrespective of race, full liberty and the protection of equal laws; no concrete case in which German interests were injuriously affected had been made out; no reason had been adduced for any modification of the Polish authorities'

attitude towards the German population, an attitude which was in accordance with the law and was perfectly correct.

BY SOVIET RUSSIA

Soviet Russia, too, raised the question of Poland's National Minorities by sending on May 10, 1924, a Note to the Polish Minister at Moscow accusing the Polish Government of oppressing these minorities and of breaking the provisions of the Treaty of Riga—the reference was to the non-Polish peoples in the *Kresy*, who were alleged to be discriminated against in the distribution of land, to be kept in a state of illiteracy, to be deprived of their churches, and to have their papers censored. These were curious charges to be made by the Soviet, to say the least! The Polish Government had no difficulty in meeting them. It replied in a Note dated five days later repelling the Soviet's accusations, which, it stated, were in any case inadmissible since they were an interference in the internal affairs of Poland. It went on to express astonishment that the Soviet should pose as the defender of the civic and religious liberties of the ethnical minorities, said to be oppressed in Poland, while in the territories of the Soviet not only its minorities but all its citizens were deprived of all these liberties. It wound up by affirming that there was no breach by Poland of the Riga Treaty—the boot was on the other foot; good relations between Poland and Soviet Russia, which Poland desired not less than the Soviet, would be advanced if the latter, instead of busying itself with unjustified accusations, was to execute loyally and strictly the obligations it had undertaken in the Riga Treaty. The Polish Note brought a Reply from the Soviet, to which Poland sent an Answer, both Governments maintaining their respective points of view.

FALSE IMPRESSIONS OF POLAND

In one way or another an impression was produced abroad that Poland was failing to fulfil her obligations under the Minorities

Treaty of 1919. Even in France, certainly no enemy of Poland, this impression led a number of not undistinguished people, in the beginning of May, 1924, to sign a protest against what was alleged to be the ill-treatment in Polish prisons of persons belonging to the National Minorities and other political prisoners. It was asserted indeed that a "White Terror" raged in Poland, an accusation which caused great indignation in that country, all its parties and Press uniting in characterizing it as unfounded. Thugutt wrote to Painlevé refuting it—Painlevé had signed the protest, which Thugutt declared to have little relation to reality as regarded its "facts," and none whatever respecting the deductions drawn from them. On May 24 the Polish Legation in Paris published a *communiqué*: "Certain Paris papers have published a protest against a so-called 'White Terror' which reigns in the prisons of Poland. The Legation is authorized by the Polish Government to deny in the most formal manner this assertion which is destitute of any foundation."

In Poland a number of her *intelligentsia* drew up a statement to the same effect, and a copy of it was sent to each signatory of the French protest. "Tolerance and freedom of thought," said these Poles, "are greater in Poland than in some Western lands. . . . No one has been arrested for participating in a strike, but arrests have been made solely of those attacking the security of the State. . . . What should not be forgotten is that Poland has many enemies who, with evident ill-will, spread abroad all sorts of calumnies and false news. The French intellectuals (who signed the protest) have fallen victims of this campaign of false news propagated by the enemies alike of France and Poland." Among the "victims" was Herriot—who had become Prime Minister of France; he said he had signed the protest as a "humanitarian act," while defending freedom of thought, "as our party has always done," not crimes against existing laws; "we had no idea of protesting against the defensive proceedings of the Polish authorities."

FAVOURABLE LANGUAGE LAWS FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES

In the party warfare of Poland it was the Left which had taken the side of the National Minorities; the Right thought it had good reason to suspect their loyalty to the State. But the Constitution had given them fullness of citizenship, and Grabski, feeling that something must be done, and that the time was opportune for doing it, introduced and carried three Laws dealing with the subject, the Sejm passing them on July 10, 1924; they were published on the last day of that month. These laws established the use, along with Polish, of the White Russian, Ukrainian and Lithuanian languages in the regions where these languages were spoken, in the administration, the schools and the courts. Thus, the White Russian tongue was legalized in Vilna, Novogrodek, Grodno, part of Polesia, and a district of Bialystok; the Ukrainian in Eastern Galicia, Volhynia and the remaining part of Polesia; and the Lithuanian in the districts of Vilna-Troki and Swienciany. White Russians, Ukrainians and Lithuanians could speak in their own language in the provincial Parliaments or *Seymik*; the local elective assemblies, which had been established in accordance with old Polish tradition, were a feature of the Constitution. Instruction in a Minority tongue was also legalized in private schools; further, it was provided that in areas where the non-Polish minority amounted to twenty-five per cent. of the population instruction might be given in White Russian, Ukrainian or Lithuanian, as the case might be, if the parents of forty children desired it. Arrangements were envisaged by which these Minority languages would have a fair share in the higher schools and educational institutions of the country. This legislation was excellent, so far as it went, but its conciliatory effect could scarcely be felt immediately, and political opposition for a time deferred its execution.

BORDER AFFRAYS

Armed attacks on Poles on the marches of the frontiers had retarded progress towards a better state of things. In mid-May,

1924, a band of men, armed with rifles and grenades, attacked and plundered a village near Vilna, two policemen being killed and several people severely wounded; another band attacked a farm a few miles away, killed the proprietor, and pillaged the place. These bands were believed to come from Lithuania, and the outrages they had committed led the Polish Government to reinforce the frontier guards with troops in the region of Vilna, Bialystok and Novogrodek. A more serious affair occurred early in August, when three bands, a hundred strong, armed with machine guns, rifles and grenades, crossed from the Soviet side of the frontier and attacked the town of Stolpce, several persons being killed and others wounded, and offices and private residences despoiled. It was about this time that the Polish Government stated that four employees of the Soviet Legation in Warsaw had been found guilty of espionage; these Russians, including two secretaries, were obliged to leave Poland. An employee of the Soviet Trade Delegation when arrested had in his possession hundreds of proclamations intended to stir up a general strike in Silesia. On August 8, 1924, Skrzynski, who had succeeded Zamoyski as Foreign Minister in July, handed to the Soviet Minister in Warsaw a strong Note, in which it was said that the attack on Stolpce had been prepared on Soviet territory, and that the Soviet authorities must have been cognizant of the preparations; the Polish Government demanded that a stop should be put to such outrages. The Soviet replied that it would cause an investigation to be made, and that the result would be communicated to the Polish Government. Such border forays as these mentioned got little or no support from the inhabitants of the Polish side of the frontier, although they were constantly subjected to Bolshevik propaganda, but they did occasion among them a feeling of insecurity which the Government allayed by strengthening the frontier guard services.

STRIKE IN POLISH UPPER SILESIA

In the beginning of August, 1924, a serious strike broke out in Upper Silesia; it was doubly serious because of the economic

crisis in Poland. The question was concerned with hours of work, which were limited in Poland to eight hours a day by one of the earliest laws of the liberated State, whose whole "Social" legislation was of an advanced character. In German Silesia the Reich, under its own economic pressures, introduced the ten hours' day, and Polish Silesia was forced to follow suit. In Soviet Russia the twelve hours' day was in operation, and the Bolsheviki made a pretence of protesting against the action of Germany; but they actively fomented a strike in Polish Silesia which they tried to extend to the Polish industrial region of Dombrova—there they failed, but they were successful in the other area, where upwards of 100,000 workers came out and remained out for three weeks, with heavy losses to themselves and the industries affected. The strike was settled by arbitration.

In the September, 1924, Assembly of the League of Nations the question of National Minorities was brought up by Apponyi, the Hungarian representative. Skrzynski, the head of the Polish Delegation, spoke of the Polish Minorities, and said that the Polish Government had accepted the principle of arbitration in dealing with them. "Poland goes far beyond," he said, "what is required of her by the Minorities Treaty." He pleased the Assembly by adding that the Polish Government was about to found a Ukrainian University in Lwow. Some days later it was announced in the Council of the League that the question concerning claims to Polish nationality which had been before it in March had been settled by a convention between Poland and Germany, on the basis of a decision of the Arbitral Tribunal of Upper Silesia.

DANZIG AND WESTERPLATTE

In these days Poland was so frequently before the League that it was said of her that she was the "League's best client." But it was hardly the fault of Poland, particularly when it was something connected with Danzig that brought her to Geneva. As from the first, the Free City continued to do everything in its

power to embarrass the Poles and to impair the special privileges Poland had been quite specifically given by the Allies. In December, 1923, the question was raised of providing Poland with a larger site than that which she had for a depot for war material in transit from the port to Warsaw or elsewhere in her own territory. The Council decided to investigate the matter through a commission of experts, who visited Danzig, and duly reported—in favour of the Polish claim. In March following, the Council approved this report, and decided that the peninsula of Westerplatte should be placed at the disposal of the Polish Government for the purpose indicated, and that while Westerplatte was being got ready for occupation, the island of Holm, in the “dead” water of the canalized approach to the port, should be handed over to the Poles, six months being set for the whole operation.

In the course of the same month Strasburger, a former Cabinet Minister, and a Pole of the Poles though his name suggested a family of German origin, was appointed Polish Commissary-General at Danzig. On taking over the post he said that his task was to separate the economic from the political, the factors in the situation which the Danzigers too often inverted, as when, by arguments that had no bearing on the subject, they tried to withdraw the Danzig customs from Polish control, contrary to the stipulations of Article 104 of the Versailles Treaty. “My chief job will be,” he went on, “to put these factors back into their proper places, and clear up the confusion that exists.” He worked to such good purpose that various agreements were entered into by the Free City and Poland respecting passports, loans contracted by the Council of the Port, participation by Danzig in the treaties of commerce signed by Poland, and so forth. Thereafter, for a while, Danzig did not figure in the agenda of the League.

DANZIG AND GDYNIA

Danzig was beginning to feel the beneficial effects of its connexion with Poland in the increase of its shipping. In pre-War

days German policy had preferred Stettin on the west and Königsberg on the east to Danzig, and its trade had declined. In 1912, Danzig's best year before the World War, nearly 6,000 vessels entered and cleared the port; in 1923 rather more than that number of ships entered and cleared, and their tonnage was nearly twice as great—an indication of what was to be expected when Polish trade and commerce expanded with the inevitable growth of Poland. As already noted, far-sighted opinion in Poland held that that growth would find Danzig insufficient for her requirements, and there had been begun a new port at Gdynia, but it was not till 1924 that construction on a considerable scale was undertaken. On July 4, 1924, an agreement was drawn up for an extensive building programme between the Minister of Commerce for Poland and a consortium or syndicate, composed chiefly of the firms of Schneider-Creusot and Hersant, the *Société de Construction des Batignolles* and the Industrial Bank of Poland. The contract called for the completion of the port by the beginning of 1930, and the cost was put at 35 millions of gold francs; and a second contract—for the equipment of the port at a cost of 15 million francs—was discussed with the Schneider firm.

These contracts were supplemented or changed in part two years later, and though work proceeded briskly on the port, the economic situation of Poland in 1924-25 did not allow as rapid a development as had been contemplated. Before 1924 550 metres of provisional harbour had been built and 150 metres of breakwater. In 1924 more breakwaters were constructed and excavation was commenced on a large inner dock. And meanwhile the embryo port was being used more and more by shipping. At that time, and for two or three years afterwards, the Danzigers failed to regard seriously this really most important Polish effort.

STEP TOWARDS AGRARIAN REFORM

Though immediately less urgent than the questions of financial restoration and the National Minorities the question of agrarian reform continued to harass the internal politics of Poland. The

legislation of 1919-20 remained on the Statute Book, but in practice was inoperative; the attempt of Witos in 1923 to deal with the question had led, as was recorded in the preceding chapter, to the fall of his Government. Grabski put off direct action in this matter, but had to face it indirectly in connexion with the collection of the capital levy. Towards the end of 1924 he announced that as a large portion of the levy falling due within the year had not been paid he would introduce a Bill empowering the Government to seize land of proportionate value, belonging to proprietors of estates of more than 750 acres who had failed to contribute to the levy; in the case of the large industrial concerns who were similarly in default the Bill would authorize the Government to impound their share capital to the amount required. On November 11, 1924, the Sejm, after discussing Grabski's proposals, rejected a vote of non-confidence by 237 votes to 52, the opposition coming mainly from the National Minority groups. But during the whole of 1924 the Grabski Government was sustained by a majority in Sejm. There were some changes in the composition of the the Cabinet; the more important were the replacement of Sosnkowski by Sikorski, as Minister of War, and of Zamoyski by Skrzynski, as Foreign Minister; later in the year Thugutt entered the Government as Vice-Premier.

PILSUDSKI AS AUTHOR

Pilsudski was living in retirement at Sulejowek during 1924, but he continued to keep in fairly close touch with the army. On March 19, his name-day (St. Joseph's), he received large delegations from most of its regiments offering their homage; in August he addressed the Congress of Legionaries, and was given enthusiastic ovations; his popularity with Polish soldiers, whether new or old, was as remarkable as ever. A good deal of his time was spent in writing; in the spring of that year he wrote *Rok 1920*, referred to in Chapter IV; he took as a text for this highly interesting account of his operations against the Bolsheviks the work called *The March to the Vistula*, which

was written by the Soviet general Tukhachevsky who opposed him, and which was included in the published versions of the Marshal's book.

Though Pilsudski had collaborated with Sikorski in preserving peace and order after the assassination of Narutowicz, the two men were not on terms of friendship. Sikorski, after becoming Minister of War, endeavoured to get Pilsudski to return to the army, and even prepared a special high place for him in it—that of Inspector-General. But Sikorski effected certain changes in the commands of regiments which had the evident result of reducing the influence of Pilsudski in the army by breaking up the Pilsudskist groups in it. Pilsudski, who knew very well what was going on, declined to accept the post of Inspector-General, as the powers that went with it were in his view far too limited. The upshot was to be foreseen in an increase of the animosity that existed between him and Sikorski; it flared up in the following year.

BETTER INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Skrzynski, who had held the post before, was an excellent Foreign Minister, and during the period he was in office—it extended till well into 1926—there was a distinct improvement in the foreign relations of Poland, which was no doubt materially assisted by the general clarifying of the international situation that, beginning in 1924, carried Europe to Locarno in 1925, after the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes had dropped out of the programme of Geneva. The extremely difficult situation of 1923, which had been caused by the occupation of the Ruhr and the divergence between France and England, went on into 1924, but its dangers were lessened by two events of far-reaching significance. The earlier of these was the Report of the Dawes Commission on Reparations in April, and the other was the defeat of Poincaré in the French general election in May. As the alliance with France was the foundation of Poland's foreign policy the result of that election, which brought Herriot

into power, was of enormous interest to her. These changes in the international situation occurred before Skrzynski became Foreign Minister, but on entering office one of the first things he did was to send a telegram to Herriot in which he spoke of the alliance between their countries, and expressed his conviction that their relations would become more and more intimate, thus guaranteeing the security of both, which was an "essential condition of the maintenance of the general peace." In a cordial reply Herriot said: "France and Poland have the same interest in the consolidation of peace and their alliance constitutes, in my opinion, a valuable (*précieuse*) guarantee of security." While the London Conference on the Dawes Plan was being held in London in August Skirmunt, on instructions from his Government, saw Herriot, then not only Prime Minister but also Foreign Minister of France, and asked him some questions concerning the security of Poland. Herriot assured him that there was "no change whatever in the policy of French collaboration with Poland, a policy that was consecrated by the treaty of alliance."

SKRZYNSKI'S GOOD FOREIGN POLICY

As always, and necessarily, Poland's foreign policy was deeply concerned with her two big neighbours, Germany and Russia. In connexion with reparations there had been much discussion of the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations. In the spring of the year Poincaré had intimated that France was prepared to accept that entrance if Germany adopted the Dawes Plan. In this and other matters Poland was willing to follow the French lead, but she took up the position that if Germany became a permanent member of the Council of the League, she was also entitled to have a permanent seat in it; indeed, she conceived that her situation *vis-à-vis* Germany demanded it. Though relations with Germany had been somewhat improved by the signing of some conventions, Poland was well aware of the hostile attitude of the Reich in general, an attitude that was constantly stressed by the extravagant declarations of German Nationalists respecting frontier revision. Nor did

Poland forget the existence of the Soviet-German Treaty of Rapallo. During 1924, too, the international position of the Soviet had been greatly strengthened by its recognition by England, France and Italy, despite their knowledge that Bolshevik propaganda, to say nothing of plots and intrigues, never stopped. Yet during that year, and notwithstanding the border forays, Poland and Soviet Russia made some slight progress to more normal relations. A railway convention was signed in April, arrangements were come to regarding the exchange of prisoners and a consular convention was adopted in July.

Touching the Baltic States Poland pursued the policy that was becoming traditional with her. In February, 1924, the Foreign Ministers of Poland, Finland, Latvia and Estonia met at Warsaw, Zamoyski, then Polish Foreign Minister, presiding; in his opening remarks he said it was the seventh time that these States had met in conference. The four Governments found themselves in general agreement on an absolutely pacific policy, but there was no Baltic League, though its formation was strongly advocated by Meierowics, the eminent Latvian statesman, whom death cut off all too soon during the following year. Respecting Czechoslovakia, Polish relations in the latter months of the year showed ever-increasing amelioration, which received fuller expression in 1925. Relations with Lithuania were still very unpleasant; the Conference of Ambassadors addressed another Note to the Lithuanian Government inviting it to come to terms with Poland, but it again refused to do so. Perhaps the pleasantest thing bearing on Polish foreign policy in 1924 occurred when Herriot raised the French Legation in Warsaw to the rank of an Embassy, the understanding being that the Polish Legation in Paris would be given the same; it looked as if Poland must be on the way to become and be recognized as a Great Power, which was the hope of many Poles.

THUGUTT ON POLISH POLITICS

Skrzynski was an undoubted success; the curious thing was that he owed his post of Foreign Minister to the fact that Thugutt,

to whom Grabski had offered it after the resignation of Zamoyski, had been compelled by his party to decline it. Thugutt had thereupon resigned the leadership of the party—the Radical Populist or Peasant group *Wyzwolenie*; he took advantage of the occasion to write an open letter which threw a lurid light on the domestic political situation in Poland. He protested against the systematic and sterile opposition to the Government made by the party at a time when the work of national reconstruction demanded the collaboration of every Pole, irrespective of party. In a State completely organized the rôle of an Opposition was to ensure rational progress; an Opposition was indispensable. But Poland was not yet sufficiently organized. The reform of finance had been advanced but was not perfected. The economic situation was difficult and unemployment was on the increase. Her alliances might be broken, and about her could be heard the cries of hate of her enemies. The Bolsheviks were flooding the country with harmful propaganda.

Mr. Grabski, Thugutt continued, was an intelligent and honest man, but could not do all the work by himself. The other Ministers went in fear of the Sejm, of the Press, and of their subordinates, and were afraid of every gesture and even of every idea. The Sejm, while not without a capacity for sacrifice in moments of crisis, was afflicted with a probably incurable impotence. Bold reforms were needed, and for their accomplishment all the parties should recognize that party sacrifices were necessary. Since the Sejm could not be improved it was essential for them to back up the Government, not by a coalition, but by putting into the Cabinet the men who understood what the situation required. "What does the Opposition mean in Poland to-day?" asked Thugutt. "Opposition against whom? Opposition against the Government, which can scarcely stand? Against the State, which is our State? Or against the Right, which can do nothing without our consent? In Poland everybody desires to be in the Opposition, but nobody is willing to take responsibility. Poland cannot prosper by criticism alone." Whatever excuse there was for sabotage in Poland during the days of her captivity, there was none now that she was free;

subordination, discipline and work, hard positive work, for Poland on the part of all her citizens were imperative. "It was the duty of every politician who understood the situation to offer to collaborate with the Government, no matter whether such action ran counter to party combinations or other influences." Thugutt's words made a great impression throughout the country, as their truth and force were widely recognized.

REYMONT AWARDED NOBEL PRIZE

Before 1924 closed attention was directed throughout the world to another phase of the life of Poland. In November the Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Ladislas Reymont for his novel *Chłopi* (The Peasants). The award could not but recall that the same high distinction had in 1902 been conferred on another great Polish novelist—Sienkiewicz, the author of *Quo Vadis?* Sienkiewicz had died at Vevey on November 16, 1916, while engaged with Paderewski and others in assisting the victims of the War in Poland, as recorded in Chapter I. With appropriate ceremony his remains were transferred from Swiss to Polish soil in 1924; as the train which took them to Warsaw stopped on its journey at Vienna and Prague, there were the most striking demonstrations of sympathy and homage in these cities, particularly in Prague, another sign of the growing *rapprochement* between Czechoslovakia and Poland. On October 26 the funeral train reached Warsaw, where there were memorable scenes; the cortège in its procession through the streets of the capital halted in front of the statue of Mickiewicz, the national poet, and there President Wojciechowski delivered an oration in praise of Sienkiewicz.

The literary work of Reymont differed greatly from that of Sienkiewicz, whose subjects and methods of dealing with them might be said to be in the "grand manner," whereas the other took the humble life of the peasants for his principal theme. But both were great artists, great men of letters, though the fame of the older man was world wide, and that of the younger was not general outside Poland at the time when each of them gained

the Nobel Prize. It was mainly through French translations that Reymont became known to Europe later; strange to say, no translation of the novel which the Swedish Academy had selected for the Nobel award had been published in French when the prize was attributed to it. A German translation appeared before the War and made it known to the world. Reymont had been writing since 1893, but *Chłopi* was his finest work. He died on December 5, 1925. When in June, 1927, the ashes of Slowacki, another great Polish poet and Pilsudski's first favourite, were transferred from Paris to Cracow for sepulture, there were impressive demonstrations of the national feeling of reverent pride in their great dead similar to those which attended the removal of the remains of Sienkiewicz from Switzerland to Poland.

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In 1925, as in 1924, the chief preoccupation of Poland was her financial and economic situation, but she had her share in the anxieties of Europe and their relief during the year, at the beginning of which Locarno might have seemed an incredible dream. When the Sejm resumed in January, 1925, it was not asked by the Grabski Government for a renewal of the plenary powers granted during the previous year, the financial situation having improved, it was thought, to such a degree that special powers were no longer necessary or even expedient. The success of the great efforts for financial restoration that the Government and the country had made appeared to be crowned by the funding of the "Relief" Debts contracted after 1918 with the various Allied and Associated Powers for footstuffs, machinery and other goods which they had provided in the first years of the liberation of Poland. The total National Debt of the State was small, the amount on January 1, 1925, being 1,747,811,500 zlotys or about £70 million stg. The Internal Debt, consisting of domestic loans and advances from the Bank of Poland, was 148,510,000 zlotys; and the External Debt stood at 1,599,301,500 zlotys. The United States was the largest creditor, Great Britain

coming next; by the funding agreements, which were negotiated in November and December, 1924, the repayment of the Debts to these countries was spread over sixty-two years, at a comparatively low rate of interest. Favourable arrangements were also made with other creditor countries about the same time. All these were matters of importance in regulating the external financial position of Poland, but scarcely influenced her general financial situation, though tending to improve her credit abroad; they were symptomatic, however, of the return of confidence.

POLISH BUDGET "SATISFIED"

Grabski discussed the situation in a speech before the Budget Commission of the Sejm on January 19, 1925. He said the Budget for the previous year had been "satisfied," and there was a surplus; this was a great success, particularly in view of the fact that a good deal of doubt had been expressed in some quarters whether it was possible to obtain the necessary revenue. Though the capital levy had not come up to expectations, other taxes had come in well, and without exceptional pressure on the taxpayers. Comparing taxation in 1924 with that before the War he said that for the former it stood at 45 zlotys *per capita* as against 29 zlotys for the latter; but it had to be remembered that Poland now maintained a considerable army, which was necessary for her defence, and was spending a fairly large amount in the development of her schools. A proof that taxation was not really oppressive, as some alleged, was seen in the growth of the amounts deposited in the savings banks by the people; the total sum was not inconsiderable in itself, and it indicated besides an increase of the saving habit, "without which," Grabski added, "no country can subsist and develop itself."

He next spoke of the unfavourable economic situation as shown in the dearness of money and the lack of credit, in unemployment, and the high cost of living, all of which had been accentuated by the poor harvest of 1924, and the consequent heavy rise in imports of foodstuffs. The remedy, he said,

could not be found in resorting to inflation, but in the concentration of all the organized forces of the nation upon work and greater economy of production, together with an adjustment of tariffs, railway rates and other things to assist in augmenting that production. Long-term credit was necessary, and the foreign capital that was coming into the country would help. Referring to the rôle filled by the Bank of Poland, he touched on the stabilization of the zloty, which had kept its parity at 5.18 to the dollar since February, 1924; the Bank acted on the principle of maintaining 60 per cent. cover for its notes either in gold or the equivalent of gold; and there was also the fact that the Budget was satisfactory.

It was a rather optimistic speech, but at the moment it seemed to have a sure foundation. As a matter of fact Treasury operations in 1924 resulted in a Budgetary deficit of 189 million zlotys, which was covered mainly by the issue of small coins and Treasury notes. In March, 1925, a loan for 50 million dollars was offered in the United States at 8 per cent., but it was not a complete success and produced only a temporary betterment in the situation. The Government continued to be well supported in the Sejm, in his management of which Grabski was most adroit. A few weeks before the close of 1924 he had made several changes in the Cabinet to give it a broader base and strengthen the Government; three Ministers resigned and other men were appointed in their places, the most notable being Thugutt, who became Minister without portfolio and Vice-Premier, charged in particular with settling questions arising out of the administration of the *Kresy*. He was no longer associated with the Radical Populists, and he remained in office for about six months. Grabski made one or two other changes in the Cabinet in the early part of 1925.

Attacks were made on him and his financial policy in the Sejm, but not until the Budget for 1925 was under discussion was there a serious assault—which came from Michalski in May. The former Finance Minister declared there was no harmony between the economic life and the financial life of the country; he sharply criticized the system of taxation and the

administration itself, which permitted two million people, he said, to live off the State; he was outspokenly pessimistic. But Michalski did not find much support in the Sejm. Zdziechowski, president of the Budget Commission, and a National Democrat, said that he did not in the least share the views of Michalski, though as party men they generally were of the same opinion; the Government, he maintained, should be congratulated on the success of its policy of financial restoration. Till well into the summer of 1925 this was the view held generally in Poland, though there was little or no genuine amelioration of the economic situation. The Sejm adopted the Grabski Budget for 1925.

DANZIG AND POLISH LETTER-BOXES

Very early in 1925 Poland leapt into sudden prominence in Europe and America, not on account of her great and determined effort to rectify her financial troubles, but because of a controversy with Danzig over postboxes, bearing the Polish white eagle, she had installed within the limits of the port. On the night of January 5, Danzigers defaced the Polish insignia and replaced them by the old Imperial German eagle. Strasburger, the Polish Commissary-General, immediately sent a Note in protest to the Danzig Senate, which he asked to take the necessary steps for preventing such occurrences. McDonnell, the High Commissioner of the League of Nations, intervened by formally requesting the Commissary-General to remove the postboxes, but Strasburger declined to do so. In Warsaw, where it was thought that McDonnell had exceeded his authority, feeling ran high. Thugutt said: "Poland should consider whether her practice of granting concessions for the purpose of reaching agreement with Danzig has proved worth while. It is high time to recall that the treaties and conventions heretofore concluded have gradually reduced our rights—for the benefit of Danzig. While Danzig prospers from its relations with Poland to a degree never reached before the War, the sea is getting farther and farther away from us. It is enough to say that Danzig's participation in Polish customs receipts gives it greater revenues than are enjoyed by any Polish city."

While the controversy was not of much intrinsic importance, its echoes reached round the world; among other rumours connected with it was one that Poland was about to attack the Free City, or that some fanatic Polish general would seize it, *à la* Zeligowski, and present the Great Powers with another *fait accompli*. The Polish Government, however, submitted its case to the League, since it felt that the treaty provisions respecting a Polish postal system in Danzig were absolutely clear, as Skrzynski said in the Sejm and at Geneva. When the question came before the Council of the League in March, 1925, it was referred to the International Court at The Hague, which upheld the Polish claims, but it was not till September, 1925, that the Council finally reached a decision in favour of Poland. The affair was but another flagrant instance of the ill will of Danzig to Poland and the almost incredible short-sightedness of its governing Senate, in view of the essential interests of the Free City.

BALTIC STATES CONFER AT HELSINGFORS

Particular attention was given throughout Europe to the Conference of the Baltic States which was held at Helsingfors on January 16-17, 1925. Shortly before the Soviet had fomented a conspiracy for the subversion of the Republic of Estonia which had come to a head in an outbreak at Reval (Tallinn), but which had been successfully dealt with by the Estonian Government. This event showed the danger to which these States were exposed in common, and the question of their security was discussed at this conference; however, they saw the answer, not in a regional league, but in the realization of the principles of the Geneva Protocol (which had not yet been killed by the opposition of England). The four States represented—Poland, Finland, Latvia and Estonia, Lithuania being again an absentee—signed a treaty of conciliation and arbitration; they agreed on the usefulness of acting together in all questions relating to security that might arise in international conferences. With the settlement of the question of Reparations

by the acceptance of the Dawes Plan which was now assured, the question of security dominated the political thought of Europe. Poland was not less concerned than any other State in its solution.

POLISH CONCORDAT WITH THE VATICAN

A special feature of her foreign policy was the conclusion of a concordat with the Holy See, which was signed at Rome on February 10, 1925. It was facilitated by the fact that the Pontiff, Pius XI, had been Nuncio at Warsaw, and was well acquainted with Poland. The great mass of the Polish people were Roman Catholic, but the Roman Catholic Church was not the Church of the State. Article 114 of the Polish Constitution provided: "The Roman Catholic religion, being that of the great majority of the Nation, occupies the first place among the religions accepted as such by the State. The Roman Catholic Church is governed by its own laws. The relations of the State and the Church will be determined on the basis of a concordat with the Holy See, which shall be ratified by the Sejm." The Church was constituted *primus inter pares*, but it had an entente, as it were, with the State that no other religious body enjoyed. The concordat gave the Church the fullest liberty; the State guaranteed to the Church the free exercise of the spiritual power, as well as the unfettered administration of its affairs and property in accordance with the canon law. It had the right to supervise religious instruction in the schools, and in return it agreed to submit its landed property to the agrarian reform—a matter which had been in dispute.

Like similar concordats made with the new States, the Polish concordat contained two points of national importance: one was that the names of archbishops and bishops about to be appointed by the Holy See in Poland should be submitted to the President of Poland to discover whether he had any political objection to them; and the other was that Polish dioceses were to lie entirely within the Polish frontiers. Thus, Silesia, where Polish, was withdrawn from obedience to the see of Breslau, and similarly

WITHDRAWN FROM
NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARIES

the *Kresy* from obedience to Mohileff. The Holy See recognized Vilna and district as an integral part of Poland—to the great indignation and discontent of Lithuania. The Sejm ratified the concordat on March 27, 1925.

QUESTION OF "SECURITY"

One of the most important meetings of the Council of the League was that which was held at Geneva in March, 1925. The Geneva Protocol, which had been unanimously approved by the Assembly in September, 1924, but which had been held up by British action in the Council that met at Rome in the following December, was finally rejected by Great Britain, supported by Italy and Japan. The loss of the Protocol was very much deplored in Poland; Skrzynski, who had taken a great interest in it, was particularly disappointed; he, like some others, thought that Europe would some day come back to it. It was evident that the solution of the question of security was still to seek.

An interesting debate took place in the Sejm early in April concerning the contingent of men to be raised by conscription in 1925. One of the deputies criticized the action of the Government and particularly Sikorski, the Minister of War, because he had not facilitated the return of Pilsudski to the army. In his reply Sikorski, going outside personal matters, said in the course of his speech that it would be a great mistake to base the peace of Europe solely on bayonets, but Poland must be in a position to defend herself. A Socialist deputy said that as universal disarmament was not to be expected, a country which felt itself menaced must take efficacious measures for its defence. "Poland," he maintained, "could not be refused the right of self-defence." In the end the Sejm unanimously authorized the raising of a contingent of 170,000 men for the year. Meanwhile the Great Allies were examining the proposals of Germany respecting a pact of security for her western frontiers and arbitration treaties for her eastern frontiers, but a certain slackness in the business was observable, the election of Hinden-

burg as President of the Reich having produced an uneasy feeling, which was very marked in Poland, and scarcely less so in France.

POLISH-CZECHOSLOVAK TREATY

While attending the meeting of the Council of the League in March Skrzynski and Benesh discussed the various matters still unsettled between their countries, and the happy result was seen when Benesh visited Warsaw in the following April and concluded a Treaty of Conciliation and Arbitration between Poland and Czechoslovakia, a commercial treaty and a treaty respecting the liquidation of various outstanding questions thus establishing really friendly relations between the two States. The *rapprochement* was of first-class political importance. It had a very good Press, especially in France; the *Temps* said that France was indissolubly united with Poland and Czechoslovakia, and that the *rapprochement* between them could cause her only to rejoice. In an interview in the *Matin* Benesh said:

Our entente is an event of political significance in view of the serious problems of the day. Negotiations for security have begun. Certain German circles are raising the question of union with Austria. There are also the troubles in the Balkans and the Bolshevik menace. We are well aware that if the Treaty of Versailles is impaired in one point, the whole fabric of Europe will be in danger. I am in a position to state that Count Skrzynski and myself have agreed to adopt an almost identical attitude towards any proposal of arbitration which is made to us by Germany.

"CORRIDOR'S" FRONTIERS "INVISIBLE"

A serious accident to a German train passing across the "Danzi-ger Korridor," while very regrettable as twenty-five passengers were killed and eighteen injured, called universal attention to the fact that transit through the "Corridor" between Germany and East Prussia was extraordinarily free. In 1921 a special mixed tribunal for the settlement of transit disputes had been set up in Danzig, under an agreement between Poland and Germany, and up to the date of this accident which occurred on April 20, 1925,

not a single case had been brought before it—which showed that the arrangements made by Poland for German trains passing over her territory had worked extremely well. Twenty minutes before the catastrophe happened a German fast train had passed safely over the place, and an inquiry instituted by the Polish railway administration showed that the rails had been criminally tampered with, the evidence pointing to a Communist plot in connexion with the usual demonstrations of the First of May. The German Government lodged a protest with the mixed tribunal, and alleged that the roadbed was in a dangerous condition, but on May 13 the tribunal, which was presided over by the Danish Consul in Danzig, dismissed the German protest and exonerated the Polish authorities from all responsibility for the disaster. Germany quite failed to make political capital out of the affair. It still remained true that, as Holz, of the Reich Railway Directorate in Königsberg, East Prussia, had reported in 1924, “the administration of the Polish railways did its best to carry out its obligations.” So far as railway transit was concerned the frontiers of the “Corridor” remained “invisible,” though Germany was careful to conceal that fact as much as possible in her revisionist propaganda.

POLISH-JEWISH RAPPROCHEMENT

Fresh changes in the Grabski Government led to the resignation of Thugutt and the appointment of Stanislas Grabski, brother of the Prime Minister, as Minister of Education. At the instance of Skrzynski, the Foreign Minister, negotiations were started with the Polish-Jewish deputies in the Sejm for a better understanding between the Poles and the Jews in Poland; Skrzynski secured the co-operation of S. Grabski, who had formerly been anti-Semite, and at the beginning of June, 1925, an agreement was concluded between Prime Minister Grabski and the Club of Jewish deputies, its president having made a declaration to this effect: “Adhering to the intangibility of the Polish Republic and the defence of the policy of Poland as a Great Power; adhering also to the view that the internal consolidation of the

Republic is necessary; the Club of Jewish deputies in the Sejm states that in conformity with these principles it prosecutes a policy in the Sejm looking to the defence of Jewish rights and interests." In a speech the Prime Minister said that a step had been taken which he hoped would open up a new era in the history of the Jewish problem in Poland, and he promised to issue ordinances that would satisfy the economic and political needs of the Jewish population—this was done on July 11, 1925. Though party extremists denounced these moves, they were undoubtedly in the national interest, and this all the more because of the difficult financial and economic situation, which had suddenly and unexpectedly worsened on account of the action of Germany, though its gravity was not fully realized at the moment.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR POLISH-GERMAN COMMERCIAL TREATY

Negotiations between Poland and Germany for the conclusion of a commercial treaty had been begun in the spring of 1925. As already recorded, Germany, so far as it was possible, had boycotted Poland economically in the first years of the liberation, but this had led Poland to open up other markets, and Germany, to retain the advantage of her geographical position, had entered into normal commercial relations with her neighbour in 1922, the result being that Germany absorbed 50 per cent. of the Polish exports and had about 40 per cent. of all the Polish imports. Poland, however, went on making commercial treaties with other States, and in 1925 had trade agreements with France, England, Italy, Japan, Rumania, Switzerland, Austria, Yugoslavia, Belgium, Turkey, Finland, Denmark, Holland, Sweden, Persia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Greece. Consequently the German exports and imports to Poland suffered a diminution. According to the Polish-German Upper Silesia convention of 1922 Germany imported free of duty 500,000 tons of coal monthly from Polish Upper Silesia till June 15, 1925. Shortly before that date the German Government declared itself ready to renew this stipulation, but accompanied

this with political conditions which Poland could not accept, particular objection being taken to Germany's proposal respecting *optants*.

Under the Versailles and Minorities Treaties Germans residing in Polish territory were given the right to reject Polish nationality and retain their German citizenship, but with the proviso in all such cases to quit the country within three years. Similarly, Polish residents in German territory were given the right to renounce German citizenship, but with the proviso to return to Poland within three years. By an agreement signed in August, 1924, Poland and Germany expressly recognized the right of reciprocal eviction, and August 1, 1925, was fixed as the date for the compulsory removal of the first class of these *optants*, namely, those possessing no real property, and dates were set for the progressive removal of the other *optants*. Germany now proposed to abrogate this agreement so far as the German *optants* were concerned. Poland refused, and Germany in reprisal refused to take Polish coal; Poland retaliated by forbidding the import of German foodstuffs into her territory; next Germany interdicted Polish timber and agricultural products.

An economic war began between the Reich and Poland, which was injurious to both; it told very heavily against the programme of Poland's financial and economic restoration, but it did not result, as some German papers foretold, in Poland "bleeding to death." About 15,000 German families and 12,000 Polish were forced to leave Poland and Germany respectively in July-August, 1925, in circumstances entailing considerable suffering and exciting strong feeling in both countries. After Locarno, and indeed as a consequence of the *détente* believed to spring from the Locarno Treaties, Poland informed Germany that she renounced her right to expel on November 1, 1925, the remaining *optants*. The British and French representatives at Warsaw took occasion to express to Skrzynski the satisfaction this generous action gave their Governments, and hoped that it would be properly appreciated by Germany—it wasn't! Poland's *beau geste* met with no response.

SKRZYNSKI VISITS UNITED STATES

In July–August, 1925, despite the tenuity of the situation then existing, Skrzynski found himself able to go to the United States on an invitation, supported by its Government, to lecture before the “Williamstown Institute of Politics” on Poland. It gave him an excellent opportunity, of which he availed himself to the full, to present the case of Poland, not only to the Americans, but to all the world. In his first lecture he touched on almost every point of interest concerning the general situation of his country: its finances and economics; its army, of which he said, “considering our peculiar geographical situation—we have 2,400 miles of land frontiers to defend—our army is small, by European standards”; its National Minorities; Danzig; the “Corridor”; relations with Soviet Russia; Poland’s support of the League of Nations; and her foreign policy—which he summed up as “essentially a policy of peace and consolidation, but independent in all matters relating to Polish affairs proper.” To a deputation of American Jews he gave positive assurances that the Polish Government would faithfully implement the agreement come to with the Jewish Club in the Sejm respecting the treatment of Jews in Poland. The Foreign Minister’s visit to America undoubtedly made a very favourable impression, and corrected not a few misunderstandings and erroneous ideas.

Chicherin visited Warsaw, *en route* for Berlin, towards the end of September, 1925, and was given a friendly reception by President Wojciechowski and the Grabski Government; he had several long talks with Skrzynski, and much was said of developing better relations between Soviet Russia and Poland, as the proximity of the two countries and their common economic interests indeed suggested. But the Treaty of Riga had never been fully executed by the Soviet, and the near approach of Locarno, to whose treaties the Soviet could not but be opposed because they set farther and farther back its World Revolution, threw a certain air of doubt and even of scepticism on Chicherin’s advances. But there was at this time a growing

sentiment in Poland for some *rapprochement* with Soviet Russia. In his speech at the reopening of the Sejm on October 6, 1925, Prime Minister Grabski certainly attributed a good deal of significance in connexion with economic possibilities to Chicherin's visit, but no treaty came out of it, for it was not easy to reconcile the Polish and Soviet points of view politically, as Poland stood by the League of Nations, and would sign a treaty with the Soviet only if it conformed to the Covenant and was complementary, not antagonistic, to Locarno.

POLAND AND LOCARNO

Skrzynski, who had taken part in the negotiations which had been going on for months between the Allies and Germany, represented Poland at Locarno on October 16, 1925, when the seven interlocking treaties generally known as the Locarno Treaties were concluded and initialed. Five days later he made an exposition of these treaties before the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the Sejm which met with its approval. Among other things Skrzynski said it was a question whether the Rhineland Pact constituted an iron barrier separating France from Europe, and, if so, whether France had the right to come to the support of Poland; France had that right; according to Article 16, in case Poland was attacked by Germany without provocation, France could go to the aid of Poland. He pointed out the reservation—if Poland was attacked without provocation on her part—was already found in the treaty of alliance between Poland and France. "Conscious of the perils that menace the nations," he said, "the statesmen united at Locarno concluded these treaties which would, he hoped, come into force immediately and last a long time; no one in any country would be so mad as to accept the possibility of war and be responsible for it." Referring to the attitude of England Skrzynski said that while she was able to guarantee peace on the Rhine alone, she did not disinterest herself respecting the other frontiers; she attached the greatest importance to the maintenance of peace and respect for treaties, and recognized the responsibilities that

arose from her having signed the Covenant of the League of Nations.

"Our collaboration with England, Chamberlain's understanding of our situation, the care England took to increase the security of all Europe," added Skrzynski, "are points on which our agreement was perfect. If Poland had obtained no more than a complete agreement between Polish and English policy, the result of the Conference of Locarno would be enormous." As for the Polish alliance with France, it came out of the conference strengthened. What precisely Poland gained from Locarno was the undertaking by Germany not to resort to war for the alteration of her eastern frontier, and Poland's security was reinsured by the guarantee of France. There was nothing, however, to prevent Germany from trying for the revision of the frontier by pacific means, and there was always open the appeal provided in Article 19 of the Covenant. There were Poles who thought that Poland gained very little by Locarno, but this was not the opinion of the bulk of her people, and Skrzynski's prestige at home was much enhanced.

Two attempts in the autumn of 1925 to regularize relations between Poland and Lithuania proved abortive. On August 31, representatives of the two States met in conference at Copenhagen, the questions under survey being floatage of logs on the Niemen, communications, consular services, and access to their respective territories. An agreement was reached on some points, but the negotiations were postponed till October when another meeting was arranged to take place at Lugano; it was held on October 11, 1925, but it broke down on two essential points—Polish consular protection for Poles at Memel and railway transit—owing to the intransigence of the Lithuanian delegation. On May 8, 1924, Lithuania had signed an agreement with the Great Allies respecting Memel, but its stipulations regarding Polish rights on the Niemen remained a dead letter. However, on January 31, 1926, the Lithuanian Government published an ordinance regulating floatage on the river, but it was not considered sufficient by Poland, and besides was not in accordance with the agreement of 1924. There was no

floatage and Memel suffered, but Lithuania continued to be impenitent.

SEVERE FINANCIAL CRISIS

While the negotiations were being conducted at Locarno the Sejm did not sit, but it resumed on October 20 with the discussion of the Budget which had been postponed from October 6, as a political crisis was feared. Nothing of the kind occurred, and on October 23 the Sejm passed a vote of confidence in the Grabski Government by a sufficient majority. In appearance the Government was still strong, but in reality its position was undermined by the financial and economic situation, which had again become extremely bad. After remaining steady for more than a year the zloty began to fall towards the close of July, 1925, as the result, it was alleged, of a combined attack on it which started in Berlin and Danzig, but there were reasons enough for the fall quite apart from that action, which in any case could have met with no success had not these other reasons existed; the fall was a symptom of a deep-rooted malady, not the malady itself, figuratively speaking, in the programme of financial restoration, but this did not become overwhelmingly obvious till later in the year. The result, to continue the figure, was not collapse, but a very serious relapse which threatened to end in collapse.

Foreign observers were inclined to attribute the fall of the zloty to an abnormal expansion, followed by an intense restriction, of credits by the Bank of Poland, and an excessive Government issue of small Treasury notes and small coins. As already seen, the Budgetary deficit of 1924 was made good by the issue of such notes and coins, a species of inflation, but mild in extent; the issue of Treasury notes and small coins increased in 1925, but their circulation was confined to Poland, for in June the Bank of Poland ceased to accept them in payment of foreign exchange, a proceeding which reduced their value. By the end of July the Bank of Poland was in an embarrassed position, owing to its having used up a large part of its resources. In the spring of 1925 it had, in common with the State and the joint

stock banks, increased its credits for economic purposes, as it had received the greater portion of the first proceeds of the loan, previously mentioned in this chapter, from America, with a consequent strengthening of its foreign reserves. But it had soon to stop increasing credits; it had to restrict them instead. The American loan was only a partial success, as was explained by Dr. Mlynarski, in a paper entitled *The International Significance of the Depreciation of the Zloty in 1925*, published in 1926 by the *Polish Economist*, Warsaw:

According to the agreement this loan should have brought in 50 million dollars. . . . It was expected that this loan would be used for covering the additional imports of foodstuffs made necessary by a very unsatisfactory grain crop. Meanwhile, when the loan was being realized, Germany raised the question of a Guarantee Pact and of a revision of frontiers, and the simultaneous election of Hindenburg to the Presidency of the Reich, created a peculiarly disquieting atmosphere. The effect on the American money market was that for some time it refrained from any investments in Europe, and owing to this tendency the Polish loan was not crowned with success. It was a new combination of circumstances over which Poland had no control. Instead of the 50 million dollars expected, the net proceeds from the American loan in the period from March to July amounted to only $23\frac{1}{2}$ millions, i.e. to 123.9 million zlotys instead of 250 millions. The burden of the deficit fell chiefly on the Bank of Poland and its reserves. The foreign exchange net reserves of the Bank amounted on January 1, 1925, to 254.1 million zlotys. The proceeds from the American loan in March and June amounted jointly to 123.9 million zlotys; thus the total reserves amounted to 378 million zlotys. By the end of July the net reserves declined to 72.3 million zlotys, i.e. in the period from January 1 to the end of July, 305.5 million zlotys were transferred abroad. . . .

If the Bank of Poland had continued to meet liberally all demands for foreign currencies, it would have exhausted its liquid foreign assets in the course of one month, and the cover for notes in circulation would have fallen below the statutory legal minimum. . . . On the eve of a bountiful grain crop (the harvest of 1925), and of an equilibrium of the Polish foreign trade balance, the Bank of Poland was at an end of its forces. On the threshold of more prosperous days it was compelled to lay down arms. The zloty rate broke down, and a moral depression of the community, a crisis of confidence, ensued. The demand for foreign currencies began to be regulated rather by the nerves than by the actual condition of the returns of foreign trade. In addition to the deficit in the foreign trade balance, the hoarding of foreign currencies, which began after July 27, tended also to aggravate the con-

dition of the balance of payments. Similarly this same nervous crisis is responsible for the fact that the activity of the foreign trade balance, existing uninterruptedly since September, 1925, has not until April, 1926, been reflected in the reserves of the Bank of Poland or in the zloty rate.

In another part of his paper Mlynarski, summing up, said that the fall of the zloty was occasioned by the lack of the additional resources expected from America, by the failure of crops, the fall in world prices of coal and sugar, and the question of the Guarantee Pact raised by Germany. The consequences of the fall of the zloty were, he stated:

The withdrawal of bank deposits, the failures of some banks, the withdrawal of foreign credits extended to banks and industrial undertakings, the hoarding of foreign currencies, the re-birth of the "Black Bourse" (illicit money-changers), the diminution of savings, the rise in the rate of interest, the increase of nominal prices, the contraction of the buying capacity of the working classes, and the crisis of trade; and, as further consequences, the crisis in production, the lowering of the taxable capacity of the population, the difficulties in balancing the Budget, the temptation to embark on an inflation policy, and finally the great increase of unemployment and a general disquietude.

SECOND GRABSKI CABINET RESIGNS

In Warsaw Prime Minister Grabski had made a statement on October 1, 1925, at a meeting of the Economic Council (which the situation had brought into existence some time before) respecting the crisis; after reviewing its disturbing features, he said that the fall of the zloty and the restriction of credit would not be so formidable in themselves if the confidence of the public had not been shaken. But there was no sign then or for long afterwards of a return of confidence; the "man in the street" had lost faith in the zloty. When the Sejm met in October Grabski faced it and the situation boldly; the Sejm responded with a vote of confidence. Surprise was therefore all the greater when it became known that the Grabski Government had tendered its resignation, which had been accepted by Wojciechowski, on November 13, 1925, because of a difference

between the Prime Minister and the President of the Bank of Poland with regard to the intervention of the Bank to stop the fall of the zloty—a proceeding which Grabski desired and was refused.

Grabski, in his letter of resignation, said he considered the maintenance of the zloty as an essential condition of the financial and economic restoration, but he also added that on account of the campaign carried on against him in the Sejm and in part of the Press he preferred to retire and thus lessen political strife. He had been in office for nearly two years—easily a record in the short political history of Poland—and during that time he had done some useful work apart from his financial legislation and despite party strife. The question of the National Minorities had been dealt with, and with considerable success. With respect to the other burning question of Agrarian Reform, progress was made towards a new settlement by a draft measure which was before the Sejm in July, 1925, and the Senate in September following, and which found final expression in the law passed in December, 1925—when another Government was in power. In the field of Social legislation—in which Poland was over rather than under developed—important Acts were passed concerning unemployment insurance and the work of women and juveniles. In May, 1924, an Act went into force regulating afresh for the army conscription, length of service, the reserve, and exemptions.

Wojciechowski called on Skrzynski to form a Cabinet; Skrzynski tried, but failed, the reason being that the National Democrats made the retention by Sikorski of the Ministry of War a condition of their support. By this time the controversy between Pilsudski and Sikorski had become acute, and it was well known that the Marshal strongly objected to Sikorski remaining at the War Office. Having no desire to be involved in this struggle, Skrzynski reported that he could not form a Government. The President next charged Rataj, the Marshal of the Sejm, to constitute a Ministry, but he also was unsuccessful.

THE SKRZYNSKI CABINET

Meanwhile Pilsudski made a bold play; arriving in great pomp at the Belvedere he informed Wojciechowski that he was decidedly opposed to Sikorski being reappointed Minister of War—and the President took note of the fact. While these things were going on there was much excitement in political circles in Warsaw, but the Ministerial crisis was solved on November 20 when a second attempt on the part of Skrzynski succeeded, after a long night of conferences with the party leaders. Skrzynski became Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, and soon afterwards Zeligowski, always a devoted admirer of Pilsudski, was Minister of War.

But the zloty was the cardinal factor; on November 20 it was 6·80, instead of 5·18, to the dollar; on November 30 it was 8; and in mid-December 9·50! The "low" point was 11 zlotys to the dollar.

CHAPTER VIII

PILSUDSKI'S INTERVENTION

1926-1928

I

DEPRESSION had set in throughout Poland with the fall of the zloty towards the close of July, 1925, and it went on deepening, like a persistent and deadly blight, for months, though the harvest of 1925 was excellent and, as a result, foreign trade, with rising exports, actually began to show a favourable balance in the following September, the improvement continuing till well into 1926. What Kemmerer, an American financial expert whom the Polish Government summoned to its assistance in December, 1925, rightly called a crisis of confidence made itself felt all over the country, nor was it easily or quickly resolved. The flight from the zloty became very marked; hoarding of gold or its equivalents proceeded apace; the zloty was discredited more and more, and the people, under this intense nervous strain, were becoming sorely afraid that the immense sacrifices of the two previous years had been made in vain. Uncertainty and confusion prevailed among the masses, whose lot was increasingly hard, but, as in 1924, the whole nation was affected to a greater or less extent, and this time the crisis was even more serious, for it came mostly from a devastating lack of faith. This potent psychological factor had its inevitable repercussions on the political situation, in itself really as uncertain and confused as the financial situation.

Many Poles, too, had by this time lost all faith in the Szym—
—the Executive as well as the Legislative Power; indeed, its general impotence, owing to party strife with all its extraordinary bitterness in Poland, was seen and known of all men. Added to its futility in government was the fact, which came to the surface now and again, that it was tainted with corruption, bribery, "wangling" of offices and posts in and under

the administration, and concession-hunting. Pilsudski alluded obliquely to this taint when, in his famous speech in July, 1923, after he had left the army (p. 254), he said that in the early days of the Republic he became Dictator "without any bribery, without any concession, timber or otherwise," and that when made Chief of the State there was "no bribery, no 'concession.'" This, of course, was not to say that every member of the Polish Parliament was tainted with corruption, but to indicate that the evil thing existed—as some scandals attested. The Sejm could not but be aware that it was under severe criticism. It played its last card in forming the Parliamentary Government composed of a large coalition of parties headed by Skrzynski on November 20, 1925. Skrzynski had made a great reputation by his work as Foreign Minister and was popular; there were high hopes of his success as Prime Minister, and the Sejm did well to put him forward as its protagonist.

SEYM SUPPORTS SKRZYNSKI

On November 25, 1925, Skrzynski delivered a speech in the Sejm—the customary declaration of policy on the taking of office by a new Ministry; a debate followed, and a vote of non-confidence was rejected; the Sejm accepted the declaration by the crushing majority of 257 votes to 106, with 76 deputies abstaining. For the Government there voted the National Democrats, the Christian Democrats—parties of the Right—and the Witos Populists—the Centre—and the National Workers and the Socialists—parties of the Left: a very strong combination. There voted against the Government the Radical Populists *Wyzwolenie*, the Ukrainian and White Russian groups, the Communists, the People's Independent Party, and another "Work" group. Those who declined to vote were the National Christian Party, the Jewish group, the German group, and the Ukrainian Populists. The real weakness of the Government was its Left wing; the Socialists were unalterably opposed to the Right and preponderant wing in their respective general policies, and, besides, were rather in favour of inflation,

whereas the Right parties were deflationist. The formation of the Government stopped for a while the fall of the zloty, and it even rallied a little.

On December 9, 1925, Zdziechowski, now Finance Minister, addressed the Seym on the financial situation, which he proposed to improve by reducing the national expenditure by 500 million zlotys, to be spread over all the activities of the State with strict impartiality; he said that by handing over the various monopolies—salt, tobacco, alcohol and saccharine; matches as a monopoly came later—to the control of experts an increase of revenue was to be expected; and a substantial foreign loan would be raised to meet the economic needs of the country, whose great natural riches would thereby come into full play. He stated that the number of the unemployed was about 250,000, and the Government would provide 36 million zlotys towards their support. Speculation in the exchange would be put down. He admitted that some of the banks were defective; but his speech was not pessimistic, and the politicians at least heard it gladly. A sign of the true state of things, however, was that farmers and peasants were allowed to pay their taxes in grain and other agricultural produce. In a statement to the Press, after his presentation of a Budget for the first three months of 1926, which was accepted by the Seym, he said that the depression of the *moral* of the population by reason of the fall of the zloty was a great difficulty, but it would be overcome, he believed, by the Government measures. Most of the Polish papers echoed these heartening words, but some doubted, and opinion abroad was divided.

AGRARIAN REFORM ACT

At last the Seym took definite action respecting the Agrarian Reform question, which had been before it so often—to the shattering of political combinations and the consequent fall of Cabinets. An Act was passed on December 28, 1925, which modified that of 1920 by restricting the parcellation of estates annually to two million hectares (about five million acres)

over a period of ten years. The measure met with fierce opposition in both Sejm and Senate; more than 600 amendments were tabled; compromises were effected, and the atmosphere was improved by the introduction of an arrangement permitting voluntary parcellation, with recourse to expropriation by the State as a last resort. The principle of fair compensation was not only admitted, but a definite scheme of indemnification was incorporated in the Act; and the acreage which a landowner could retain was extended beyond what the former Act allowed, especially in the *Kresy*.

While these important changes indicated that the revolutionary ideas prevalent earlier in the Republic had lost much of their force, they also showed a recognition of the economic truth that it was unwise to cut up the large estates with their relatively much higher cultivation and production, and put the numerous small farms resulting from such parcellation into the hands of the peasants with small means or no means at all. There was also the well-known complementary fact that there was not enough land in Poland for all her peasantry—as was the case in some other countries. The Act itself was a compromise; it did not please the extremes of the Right or the Left; but at any rate it was a workable solution in part of a very difficult question, and it served to quieten the agitation among the peasants and reduce in some degree their discontent with the financial and economic situation of the country, which was hard for them, though not so hard as for the workers in the towns, more than half of whom were on the list of the unemployed, with the cost of living terribly high. The peasants had at least plenty of food for themselves and their animals, for the harvest had been abundant; their circumstances had been very much worse during the previous winter. But food remained very dear in the towns.

ECONOMIC DEPRESSION INTENSIFIED

During the first quarter of 1926 there was a rather more hopeful feeling in Poland, more particularly in political circles.

Kemmerer, the American expert, was partly responsible for it, as he had reported that the financial and economic situation was fundamentally sound—which was true enough in view of the vast natural resources of Poland, but did not go far in this time of emergency, though a rise in the zloty in mid-January was encouraging; the improvement, however, was not long maintained. On January 28 Zdziechowski presented to the Financial Commission of the Sejm the draft of the Budget for the year which had been adopted by the Skrzynski Government. The deficit in the Budget for 1925 had amounted to 225 million zlotys, but, as in 1924, it had been covered by the issue of Treasury notes and small coins—the emission in 1926 came to nearly 290 million zlotys—inflation again! The amount of such currency put out at the beginning of 1925 was only 22·3 per cent. of the amount of bank notes in circulation, but by the end of the year it exceeded bank notes in circulation by about 14 per cent.; this in itself was sufficient to enfeeble the exchange. Concerning the Budget for 1926, Zdziechowski spoke of compressing further the national expenditure and bringing it within the revenue; the figures presented showed a deficit of about 200 million zlotys, which he proposed should be met, in the old way, by cuts in the administration amounting to 130 million zlotys, and a reorganization of State undertakings so as to produce the remainder. The threatened cuts were not popular with the administrative bodies affected, but in this matter the Sejm had shown an example, as its members had previously renounced voluntarily 10 per cent. of their stipends. On February 9 the Budget Commission began its examination of the draft Budget and continued it into April, by which month the situation was undeniably much worse, and the depression throughout Poland more marked than before, with the zloty hovering round the low point again.

PILSUDSKI AND THE HIGH COMMAND

For two or three months the Skrzynski Government maintained a strong appearance. One or two of the Ministries

changed hands without affecting it; a Socialist Minister replaced another, and the alliance of the Socialists with Skrzynski still subsisted. A more serious matter, as it involved the army, was the resignation of Zeligowski as Minister of War. The general, who was a great believer in Pilsudski, was extremely desirous of getting the Marshal into the active army once more. As in his controversy with Sikorski, Pilsudski was as determinedly opposed as ever to the draft of the law respecting the organization of the High Command, as it appeared to him to limit the action of the Commander-in-Chief; he now made the complete withdrawal of the draft a condition of his return to the army. Though not a partisan of Pilsudski, Skrzynski was not one of his opponents; but the chief support of the Government was the Right which was hostile to Pilsudski, particularly regarding the High Command, and the Marshal's demand was embarrassing, and not less so because the Socialists supported it. After various shifts of the political wind, which showed Skrzynski that he could not carry the draft in the Sejm, the draft was withdrawn, whereupon Zeligowski withdrew his resignation. The matter dropped for a while, but Pilsudski had scored—to the delight of the majority of the officers of the army, who thought that he had been treated with ingratitude for his great services to it and the State.

RUMANIAN-POLISH ALLIANCE EXTENDED

Foreign policy claimed a large share of attention during these three months. The Treaty of Alliance with Rumania terminated in March, 1926, and negotiations were begun for its renewal, but adapted to the new situation created in Europe by Locarno. The same reasons for its continuance existed as before, as both countries recognized. In the preceding November a Polish delegation consisting of about a dozen deputies of the Sejm and members of the Senate had visited Bucarest, and had been given an enthusiastic reception by the Rumanian Parliament; I. Bratianu, Prime Minister of Rumania, said in the Chamber that the "alliance was indispensable to the vital interests of the

two States and to the civilization of the world." A new treaty, amplified on the Locarno basis, and enlarged by Rumania's guarantee of the whole existing territory of Poland, both west and east, was signed at Bucarest on March 26, 1926. Article 1 read: "Poland and Rumania undertake reciprocally to respect and maintain against all aggression their territorial integrity and their present political independence." Article 2 specifically referred to the Covenant of the League and its application. The treaty was registered with the League on March 7, 1927, after ratifications had been exchanged at Warsaw about four weeks before.

POLAND CLAIMS PERMANENT SEAT ON LEAGUE COUNCIL

But what chiefly interested Poland at the moment in 1926 respecting her foreign relations was the place she was to occupy in the Council of the League of Nations. On March 2 the Sejm ratified the Locarno Treaties by a majority composed of the Government coalition and the Jewish Club, the minority consisting of the extreme Right, the Radical Peasants, the Communists, and the Ukrainian and White Russian groups. Stronski, speaking for the extreme Right, moved that ratification should be postponed till Poland obtained a permanent seat in the Council, but the motion was not put to the vote as being contrary to the Constitution. The Sejm, however, adopted unanimously, with the exception of the Ukrainians and White Russians, a resolution to the effect that the "attribution to Poland of a permanent seat was a necessity resulting from the rôle of the Polish State in Central and Eastern Europe, a rôle filled by Poland not in any particular interest, but in the general interest." It was added that "if this necessity was satisfied, the Sejm would see in it the proof of the victory of the idea of peace and of the peaceful coexistence of nations, instead of the policy of hatred which sooner or later would precipitate Europe into a new catastrophe."

When this resolution was passed, the general belief was that Germany would enter the League of Nations at the extra-

ordinary Assembly which had been called for March 8, 1926, and be accorded a permanent seat in the Council. There was also the question of a further enlargement of the Council. From the outset, however, Germany objected to any enlargement at this meeting of the Council in addition to her own membership; she had the support of Sweden. France, England, Italy and Belgium proposed as a compromise that the German suggestion of constituting a commission to study the question of enlargement should be accepted, with a rider that meanwhile Poland, the only Locarnist Power not represented in the Council, should be given a non-permanent seat. Germany refused this proposal, and it was clear that her objection was to Poland *qua* Poland. Another attempt at a compromise, which would have entailed the resignation of Sweden and Czechoslovakia from the Council and the election in their place of Poland and Holland, came to nothing, because Brazil announced that she would vote against assigning a permanent seat to Germany unless she was accorded one at the same time. This broke up the Assembly, the questions involved being deferred to the ordinary Assembly to be held in September, the Council taking in hand in the meantime, through a commission, the problem of its own composition. To allay whatever fears were felt that the League of Nations had been weakened by what had taken place, the Locarnist Powers—Belgium, Czechoslovakia, England, France, Germany, Italy and Poland—issued on March 16 a statement that there had been no attack on the work of peace realized at Locarno, which maintained its full value and force. Skrzynski gave an account of all that had occurred at Geneva to the Sejm's Foreign Commission on March 23, and it was accepted by 19 votes to 5, a motion of non-confidence not being even put. All the parties were agreed that Poland must persist in her demand for a permanent seat in the Council.

Towards the end of March the Government had again to consider the difficulties of the financial situation. On March 26 Zdziechowski informed the Budget Commission of the Sejm that there was a deficit of not less than 300 million zlotys, and

that steps must be taken to achieve the necessary equilibrium—not by increasing taxation which would weaken the taxpayers still further, and they were over-taxed already, but by rigorous economies. The Socialists supporting the Government demurred to some of his proposals, but agreement was come to provisionally, thus obviating a Cabinet crisis, and the Budget for April was passed by the Sejm. Among other subjects of interest in the politics of the day, that of Electoral Reform was much discussed, different views being expressed by the various parties and groups, perhaps the most notable being put forward by the National Democrats, who advocated a reduction in the number of the deputies in the Sejm from 444 to 224, and in the Senate from 111 to 56 senators. But the financial and economic situation was the dominating problem; the opposition of the Socialists to the Government's provisional programme had been withdrawn; the Socialists, however, were not satisfied, and the intervention of the Easter holidays left the whole future financial situation in the air.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH GERMANY SUSPENDED

Though her first *beau geste*, in the matter of the optants, had not been responded to by Germany, Poland made another and equally spontaneous *beau geste* by renouncing her right to liquidate or dispose of certain properties belonging to Germans in the Polish territories that had formerly been in the possession of Germany. This right she had under Article 297 of the Versailles Treaty; Germany contested this right, and demanded that Poland should not exercise it; that she should not do so was one of the conditions Germany imposed in the negotiations for the commercial treaty which broke down in 1925. On March 25, 1926, a joint conference was held in Berlin to deal with this question. The properties Poland was willing to renounce included 15 large estates, nearly 800 farms of a total area of about 120,000 acres, 300 houses, and about 150 industrial establishments; she offered further concessions, the whole having both very considerable material value and, at the

same time, a good deal of political importance. In 1922 there had been pourparlers on Article 297, but solely with a view to defining the mode of its application. At this new conference at Berlin the German representative cast doubt on the right of Poland to liquidate German properties in Poland at all, though the bearing of the Article was perfectly clear, rejected the Polish offer, and demanded that Poland should renounce absolutely any liquidation whatsoever of such properties. The result of this intransigent attitude on the part of Germany was the immediate suspension of the conference.

If there was little or no improvement of the relations between Poland and Germany, the case was quite otherwise with the relations between Poland and Czechoslovakia. As already mentioned, the visit of Benesh, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, to Warsaw in April, 1925, had resulted in the conclusion of three friendly treaties, and might justly be described as the turning point in the relations of the two States. All these treaties went into force during a return visit to Prague paid by Skrzynski on April 13, 14 and 15, 1926. The commercial treaty of 1925 had not been ratified by the Czechoslovak Parliament, but it was put into force by a special ordinance of President Masaryk—an exceptional action which greatly impressed Polish opinion. The visit of Skrzynski to the Czechoslovak capital, where he received every possible mark of appreciation, manifested Polish-Czechoslovak solidarity. The Press of the two countries made much of the occasion, and stressed the fact that the destinies of both were intimately entwined; it was pointed out that a close *entente* was an essential factor in the maintenance of the general peace. From Prague, Skrzynski went on to Vienna, where he signed a treaty of arbitration with Austria—which was not too well received by the pan-Germanists in that country, as they knew that Poland was opposed to *Anschluss an Deutschland*, like France and the Little Entente; Austria's relations with Poland, they affirmed, depended on the degree of friendship existing between Berlin and Warsaw. Skrzynski returned to Warsaw on April 16 to find the Seym, which had reopened three days before, deep in

the consideration of the depressing financial situation, but a fresh and unexpected turn soon took place in the European political situation, which could not but seriously occupy his attention and that of all Poland.

SOVIET-GERMAN TREATY OF BERLIN

This was the Soviet-German Treaty signed at Berlin on April 24, 1926. Several days before the conclusion of the treaty it had become known to the public, through an announcement in the *London Times*, that the German Government was negotiating with the Soviet for a new treaty in place of that of Rapallo, 1922, and that the French, British and Italian Governments had been informed of this proceeding. The news made a great sensation, and nowhere more so than in Poland. The circumstances were recalled in which the Rapallo Treaty was sprung on the Conference of Genoa, and the disastrous effect it had on that conference's activities. The agitation produced by that treaty had long simmered down, but there were still not a few people in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe who regarded that instrument as sinister and suspect, as a species of Russo-German outflanking attack on the Allied position, as in fact a plain indication rather than a mere suggestion of a Soviet-German alliance. In view of the failure of Germany to obtain entrance into the League of Nations, it was asked if this new treaty was another outflanking attack, of an even more serious nature, on the general peace. Was a threat not implicit in it? And particularly to Poland, whose advances had been repelled by Germany?

In a leading article the *Paris Temps*, on April 20, 1926, said no one could be surprised that the Polish and Czechoslovak Governments were engaged in a careful scrutiny of the treaty, and that Benesh, in agreement with Skrzynski, had drawn the attention of the French, British and Italian Governments by a *questionnaire* to the need to investigate its bearing on the obligations Germany would have to undertake on her entrance into the League. That, indeed, was the crux! Great dissatisfac-

tion with the treaty was expressed in France; it was criticized in some quarters in England, but the view of the majority appeared to be that, instead of being a step away from the League, it might prove to be the means of bringing the Soviet into touch with Geneva. The German Government made it known that it believed the treaty to be complementary to and in no sense at variance with Locarno. The document itself, which was sometimes described as embodying a neutrality treaty, showed in its First Article what its signatories meant when it said that Germany and the Soviet would remain in friendly contact for the purpose of discussing *à l'aimable* every question of a political or economic character affecting them. Next came the Neutrality Article, and then followed one which seemed to be directed against the economic boycott—the weapon of the League against an aggressor.

Correspondence between the signatories of the treaty, and accompanying it, declared that while Germany and the Soviet desired to promote the peace of the world, Germany reserved to herself the right to say in a given case whether or not the Soviet was an aggressor. Such statements could scarcely be expected not to excite unfavourable comment, but in the end the Allies accepted the German assurances that all was well, and the agitation over the treaty died away. But the treaty was not forgotten in Poland, as Germany continued to fight the Poles in both economic and political fields; the discovery in February of a German spy organization in Upper Silesia illustrated her persistent, apparently implacable, hostility. But a series of grave events of overriding importance which presently occurred at home relegated the treaty to a secondary place for a time in the thought of every Pole.

SKRZYNSKI CABINET IN DIFFICULTIES

The compromise which kept the Socialists in Skrzynski's grand coalition Government did not last long. To combat the bad financial situation they drew up a scheme on Socialist lines; one clause of it provided that the State should give large sums

monthly in aid of the unemployed and in support of the industrial life of the country. The Bank of Poland was to issue notes against the deposit of gold and silver articles. The salaries of functionaries were to be raised to the level of the previous year. The equilibrium of the Budget was to be secured by increased taxation. And so forth, the list closing with a proposal for an inquiry as to the means of increasing production and lowering the cost of living. Zdziechowski outlined a new programme at a special meeting of the Government, the gist of which was an addition of ten per cent. to all taxes, whether direct or indirect, with a further readjustment downward of the salaries of functionaries, the result being an increase in the revenue of 156 million zlotys and a reduction in the expenditure of 111 million zlotys. This programme, which avoided recourse to inflation, was adopted by the majority of the Ministers, the minority being composed of the two Socialist Ministers.

On April 20 the Socialist Party withdrew from the grand coalition, and this involved the resignation of the two dissident Ministers. Next day Skrzynski, who had apprised the President of what had happened, told the remaining Ministers that Wojciechowski was opposed to the resignation of the Government which had been proffered, and desired it to carry on—at least till the Budget for May had been voted. When the news of these Ministerial difficulties became public, there was a fresh fall of the zloty and a deepening of the general depression. The Skrzynski Government continued in office, two high functionaries taking the place temporarily of the two Socialist Ministers. On April 28 the Sejm voted the Budgets for May and June on the Government lines by 200 votes to 143. Except for some collisions between Socialists and Communists in the streets of Warsaw, the "First of May" passed off quietly. The National Fête, May 3, was celebrated throughout Poland with the usual ceremonies and rejoicing; in Warsaw a solemn service was held in the Cathedral attended by the President of the Republic, members of the Government, diplomatists, senators and deputies.

Two days afterwards Skrzynski, in agreement with the rest

of the Cabinet, resigned. In a statement to the Press the outgoing Prime Minister said that the Government, which was a "Government of social peace," had resigned because the basis of the coalition had contracted, but he hoped that his resignation would facilitate the formation of a coalition inspired by the same principles as had been his own when he took over the Government. A truce in party strife and a loyal collaboration were, he continued, indispensable for the amelioration of the financial situation, the diminution of unemployment and the cheapening of credits. After mentioning that the monthly Budget had been passed, and that draft Bills had been presented to the Sejm for assuring the equilibrium of the Budget, for dealing with the capital levy, for organizing the High Command and the police, Skrzynski said that the Government had resigned—it had not fallen. The reference to the Bill for organizing the supreme command indicated that an effort had been made to get Pilsudski to support the Government; but he refused to affiliate himself with any parties, and declared that what was wanted was a non-partisan Government of experts.

THIRD WITOS CABINET

President Wojciechowski appealed to several of the prominent men in politics to try to form a Government, but they declined; the political situation clearly showed itself quite as confused and uncertain as was the financial; both were very difficult, and responsibility was shunned. After five days of negotiations with the party chiefs the President invited Witos to constitute a new Government, and the Populist leader was successful on May 10 by making a coalition of the Right and Centre parties, with 237 votes out of the 444 in the Sejm. It was the third Cabinet of Witos, and his supporters were of the same political colours as those of his second. He had a clear Parliamentary majority, but the parties of the Left clamoured for a dissolution of Parliament as the best solution of the crisis. The Witos Government, however, had been legally constituted; Witos himself was Prime Minister; Zdzichowski retained the port-

folio of Finance; but there was a new figure at the head of the Ministry of War, General Malczewski, whom Witos had appointed without consulting Pilsudski whose enemy Malczewski was. During the months of the existence of the Skrzynski Government the War Office had been in the hands of Zeligowski, and he had taken the opportunity to undo what Sikorski had done respecting the commands of regiments; the Pilsudskists were put back in their former places. Malczewski as Minister of War would mean a fresh purging of the army as against the Marshal, as he knew very well. And the new Government, a combination of the Right—the National Democrats and their allies—and the Centre—the Witos Populists *Piast*—was fundamentally the same kind of Government which had driven him out of the army. The soul of Pilsudski, who regarded himself, not without reason, as the Leader in the Liberation and the Creator of the Army of Poland, revolted.

During the night of May 10-11, 1926, a persistent rumour spread throughout Warsaw that shots had been fired at the house of the Marshal at Sulejowek, and that an attack had been attempted by large numbers of men belonging to political organizations hostile to him. Coming on top of the discontent felt and shown by a very considerable part of the Polish people with the Witos Government, this news caused tremendous excitement in the army, with the immediate result that several regiments stationed at Rembertow placed themselves at the disposal of Pilsudski, a spontaneous movement of admiration and devotion. On May 11 the *Kurjer Poranny* published an interview given by him attacking in strong terms the Witos Government in general and Witos in particular; he accused Witos of corruption and declared him unworthy to occupy such a position. "I do not regard the crisis as terminated," said the Marshal. "I enter on a struggle against the evil that corrodes the State, against parties without restraint, on the lookout for personal profits, and forgetful of the general interest." The Government suppressed the issue of the paper, which, however, had produced an effect. In the early afternoon *Rzeczpospolita*, the organ of Korfanty, got out a special edition

stating that judicial proceedings would be instituted forthwith against Pilsudski, the "calumniator." Later in the day the *Kurjer Poranny*, through its evening paper, the *Przegląd Wieczorny*, again denounced the Government and supported its attitude with militant declarations by some prominent members of the Left. The tide of political feeling ran high in Warsaw. In parts of the city placards on the walls proclaimed Pilsudski as the one man who could save Poland. In the evening bodies of men roamed the streets and invaded the cafés shouting, "Long live Pilsudski!" Bands were compelled to play the *Pierwsza Brygada*, the march of Pilsudski's First Brigade of the old Legions.

PILSUDSKI MARCHES ON WARSAW

Leaving the camp at Rembertow next day the Marshal, at the head of three regiments, marched on Warsaw. He had come to a decision—with himself, as was his way. He said to some journalists late that night: "When I was Chief of the State I proved often enough that I am opposed to violence. It is, then, after a terrible struggle with myself that I have decided to use force with all its consequences. All my life I have fought for the respect of what are called imponderables—virtue, honour, courage and in general the moral values of man. . . . I have never sought profits for myself or my *entourage*. There should not be in the State such great injustice towards those who by their labour serve others. There should not be such great iniquity in the State if it does not wish to perish." Pilsudski's first move was the occupation of the Praga suburb, on the east side of the Vistula, and the bridgeheads of the Kierbedz and Poniatowski entrances into Warsaw. President Wojciechowski, summoned in hot haste from Spala, his summer residence, met the Marshal on the Poniatowski Bridge, and telling him that the Government would defend the Constitution and not yield to rebellion, ordered him to withdraw his troops. The President was pale but resolute. He and Pilsudski had been friends of old, but latterly he had evinced a tendency to the

Right. He had given way to the Marshal about Sikorski; he had made up his mind not to give way again. Pilsudski replied that if he, the President, dismissed the Witos Government he, Pilsudski, would see what could be arranged. But Wojciechowski stood firm—as did Pilsudski. The die was cast. The two men parted, the President to organize the defence of Warsaw, and Pilsudski to begin the attack. It was a tragic moment, not only in the lives of these former comrades, both of them sincere patriots, but also in the history of the new Poland, for it meant civil war. Fortunately, as it turned out, the struggle was short and decisive.

GOVERNMENT RESISTS

From the Poniatowski Bridge, Wojciechowski drove to the Radziwill Palace, the residence of the Prime Minister, where the Cabinet was in session. Having informed the Government of what had passed between himself and Pilsudski, the President exhorted his Ministers to do their duty—they had thought of resigning—and drove off to the Belvedere, after bidding them to let him know what was going on. The Government next issued a proclamation to the nation, decreed martial law, and decided to resist at all costs. Rozwadowski, an opponent of Pilsudski, was placed in command of the Government forces, but these were considerably inferior in numbers to those led by the Marshal, who at the outset had gained a strategical advantage in securing the bridgeheads. Rozwadowski's first step was an effort to get possession of them, and fighting began early in the evening of May 12, but the attack was repulsed, and Pilsudski's troops marched on into the centre of the city; the members of the Government fled from the Radziwill Palace and betook themselves to the Belvedere; the Government offices were occupied by the Pilsudskists. A hot battle raged in the streets as the Government forces slowly withdrew towards the Belvedere, which they purposed to defend.

BATTLE OF THE STREETS

Next day, May 13, the fighting was renewed and for some hours the issue hung in the balance. The Government had received considerable reinforcements; its troops counter-attacked from the direction of the Belvedere, and began pushing the Pilsudskists back to the centre of the capital, while troops from the citadel, which had still held out, assailed them from the rear, thus placing them between two fires. But the citadel troops, with their officers, went over to the Marshal *en masse*, and the Government lost a decided tactical advantage. In the afternoon Pilsudski was greatly strengthened by the opportune arrival of the Vilna Division commanded by Rydz-Smigly, and this decided the day. The Government forces were counter-attacked in their turn, and were driven back on the Belvedere, the fighting in the streets costing upwards of 300 killed and 1,000 wounded, but most of the casualties occurred among the civilians, who took no part in the struggle except as onlookers and paid dearly for their untimely curiosity. Meanwhile the papers of the Right and Left were carrying on simultaneously a war of words; those of the Right stigmatized the action of Pilsudski as seditious, and assured the public that it would soon be "liquidated"; the Socialist *Robotnik*, on the other side, said a "Government of workers and peasants" would be established, with Pilsudski at its head—which showed that it did not read the Marshal aright. During the evening of May 13 the papers of the Right published another proclamation of the Government in which it was stated: "The Belvedere has become the symbol of legality and of fidelity to the fatherland and the Constitution." It also said that the Government forces were steadily increasing, and that the rebellion would soon be crushed, an opinion that was based on the receipt of a message by aeroplane from Poznan to the effect that Dowbor-Musnicki and Joseph Haller were raising an army of volunteers to march to Warsaw for the support of the Government. Nearly all the chiefs of the Right were together in Poznan, full of wrath with the rebels and their leader.

VICTORY OF PILSUDSKI

Very early in the morning of May 14 Pilsudski launched a strong assault on the Belvedere which, after some heavy fighting, was completely successful; the aviation ground, with many aeroplanes, nearby was captured. President Wojciechowski and his Cabinet were about to take breakfast when an officer warned them that the situation was desperate, and they immediately decided on flight to Wilanow, about 8 miles from Warsaw. In the evening the President and the Government discussed the situation, and decided to abandon the struggle. Wojciechowski resigned the Presidency, which thereupon passed provisionally to Rataj, the Marshal of the Sejm, according to the Constitution; Rataj was sent for and on reaching Wilanow was given three sheets of ordinary writing paper by Wojciechowski on which respectively were inscribed the resignation of himself, the Government's resignation, and a minute of the last meeting of the Government. Rataj returned to the Palace of the Sejm—in which he had his quarters—and signed a statement accepting the Presidency *ad interim*. Shortly after the resignation of Wojciechowski and the Government, an army division from Pomerania arrived on the scene to support the Government—too late; but it attacked Warsaw from the west and came under the fire of the Pilsudskists. Presently an armistice was concluded—this was the last of the fighting; the civil war was over; Pilsudski had triumphed. As quickly as possible he gave a legal aspect to the proceedings.

FIRST BARTEL CABINET

A new Government was constituted. At 8 o'clock in the morning of May 14, Rataj, as Acting-President of the Republic, conferred with the victorious Marshal, and they agreed to confide the task of forming a Cabinet to Casimir Bartel, who had been Minister of Railways during the war with Soviet Russia, and who, though a member of the Left, was popular with the other deputies in the Sejm. He had some difficulty

in getting a Ministry together; the first idea had been to constitute a Government of National Union drawn mostly from the Sejm, but some of those he approached declined, and the Socialists were annoyed because that sort of Government was entirely different from what they had expected. In the end Bartel had to be satisfied with a Cabinet composed almost exclusively of experts and high functionaries; he offered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Skrzynski, who refused it. A. Zaleski, who was Polish Minister at Rome, and happened to be in Warsaw on leave at the time, became Acting Foreign Minister. Pilsudski contented himself with the Ministry of War, but in reality he was *the* Government. After the formation of the Government on May 15, the first act of Rataj was the issuing of a proclamation ordering a suspension of hostilities. The Government addressed a proclamation to the nation saying that it would hold power till the election of a President of the Republic by the National Assembly; that the causes of the tragic events of the last few days lay in the moral disorder that devastated public life in Poland; that there must be a moral renaissance, with the development of the Republic based on respect for law and social justice and the elimination of party and individual egotisms; that measures would be taken immediately to root out the evil that afflicted the State; that all citizens of Poland must be absolutely one in their allegiance to and collaboration with the State.

This proclamation made a good impression throughout the country, except in Poznan, the great stronghold of the Right, where the *Kurjer Poznanski*, the organ of the National Democrats, said as late as May 19 that the crisis was still far from being terminated, and that the mission of the western provinces of Poland was to save the State. That the State was already saved was a truth they did not recognize for some time, and to help them to see it, Trampczynski, the Marshal of the Senate, and himself a Poznanian as well as a chief of the National Democrats, went from Warsaw to Poznan to explain that in the circumstances national discipline must be observed by all, and that it was useless to agitate against the "rebels"; the

whole matter must be regarded as definitely settled, for all was in order again; the rebels were rebels no longer. The chiefs of the Right at Poznan at first asked that the National Assembly should meet in that city instead of Warsaw, where they maintained the election would not be free. But Rataj had already decided on Warsaw—and in Warsaw it was held on May 31, 1926.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTS PILSUDSKI PRESIDENT

It was generally thought that Pilsudski would be elected—that he wished to be elected President. His friends and admirers began a vigorous campaign in his favour a fortnight before the meeting of the Assembly; the Centre and Left parties decided to support him for the office; the army hoped he would take it; but the Marshal himself would neither affirm nor deny that he was even a candidate. During these days of suspense and excitement Pilsudski made several public statements to journalists and others which elucidated his motives for the *coup d'état* and the consequent situation.

"Poland," he said, "is the victim of her Parliamentary system"—with the wars of Right and Left—but it was "the Right from which had come the assassin of President Narutowicz, which defended this Parliamentarism, and had given the country a Constitution that deprived the Executive of any possibility of prompt action." The Sejm, he declared, imposed as Ministers not the most competent men, but men who had a talent for speech-making, and were adepts in intrigues and manipulations, which, however, took up so much of their time when in office that they were otherwise inefficient. "The Government loses nine-tenths of its force from the pacts made with party groups who, however, support a Minister only so long as he fulfils all the requests of these deputies. Yet what Poland needs is a strong Government . . . and Ministers independent of parties." On another occasion he said that when he returned from Magdeburg he was so sure of the wisdom of the nation which had been born again that he did not desire

to be dictator, and therefore had put the supreme power into the hands of the Constituent Sejm—with what result? “What do we see?” he asked. “Eternal quarrels, eternal discords! Democratic liberty abused to such an extent as to make democracy hateful! . . . To-day it would be easy for me to stop you from going into the hall of the National Assembly” (he was addressing some of the deputies), “but I am still trying to see if the interests of Poland cannot be served except by force. Our Parliament has far too many privileges, and those who are called on to administer the State must have more power.”

Though there had been rumours in the foreign Press for weeks before that Pilsudski or his partisans would attempt a *coup d'état*, his intervention—to such purpose, too—when it actually came took nearly everybody abroad by surprise. This was particularly the case in France, where there was no clear understanding of the situation. Perhaps the most illuminating expression of Pilsudski's views was that which he gave to the distinguished French journalist, Sauerwein, who reproduced the interview in the *Matin* of May 26, 1926. When Sauerwein said to the Marshal that he did not speak like a dictator, Pilsudski replied:

Is it quite necessary that I should be a dictator? I am a strong man and I like to decide all matters by myself. When I consider the history of my country, I cannot really believe that Poland can be governed by the stick. I don't like the stick. Our generation is not perfect, but it has a right to some respect; that which will follow will be better. No! I am not in favour of a dictatorship in Poland. I conceive of the rôle of the Chief of the State in a different fashion—it is necessary that he should have the right to make quick decisions on questions of national interest. The chicanes of Parliament retard indispensable solutions. We live in a legislative chaos. Our State inherited the laws and prescriptions of three States, and they have been added to. The authority of the President must be increased by simplifying things. I do not say that we should imitate exactly the United States where the great force of the central power is counterbalanced by the large autonomy of the different States. But something in that order of ideas should be sought for that can be applied to Poland. . . . They talk to satiety of the Right and the Left—I do not like these categories; they cover different social conceptions, and the solution of social problems is still to seek. We are the neighbours of Russia who has tried a social

experiment on a great scale by putting down the old institutions and replacing them by others. We have no wish to imitate her.

When I came here from Magdeburg at the end of the War I had absolute power in my hands. I could have kept it, but I saw that Poland must be prudent, because she was new and poor; she had to avoid hazardous experiments. The Right and the Left with us are about equal, as the weak majorities by which our social laws were passed proved. For the moment we must remain as we are, without essaying adventures with the Right or the Left. Morality in public life is the essential thing. A great effort of honesty is needed after the demoralization caused by the years of war and the centuries of slavery. I have friends in the Right and in the Left, but Poland cannot recover on a policy of party—the country and myself have had enough of these labels and programmes.

On May 31, 1926, the National Assembly elected Pilsudski President of the Republic by 292 votes to 193 for Bninski, the candidate of the Right, and Governor (*Wojewoda*) of Poznan. The Assembly was composed of 554 deputies and senators; its full strength was one deputy more, but his mandate had been annulled; the total voting strength of the Right was 206 votes, of the Centre 96, of the Left 135 and of the National Minorities 111; there were 6 Communists; 69 either gave in blank papers or abstained from voting. When the result was officially announced, Bartel, accompanied by Rataj and Trampczynski, the Marshals respectively of the Sejm and the Senate, went to Pilsudski and informed him of his election.

PILSUDSKI DECLINES

Pilsudski said that he regarded the vote of the National Assembly as giving a legal consecration to his intervention; nevertheless he had no intention of accepting the Presidency. Both friends and enemies were alike astonished by this decision, though his recent statements might have prepared them for it. He gave his reasons in a letter sent that day to Rataj. After thanking the Assembly for his election he observed that this was the second time his historical actions had been legalized, actions, however, which had often been subjected to a malevolent opposition. He was glad that on this occasion he had not

been elected unanimously, as he had been in 1919; there were now less treachery and falseness in Poland than there were then. He could not accept the Presidency. There were things he could not forget. He had not sufficient confidence in himself or in those who had elected him. He could not forget the corpse of Narutowicz, whom he had not been able to save from assassination, nor the shots fired at his own children at Sulejowek (the attack on his house). He stated once more that he could not live without work that gave immediate results; the Constitution did not permit the President to do such work, and therefore he, Pilsudski, could not be President. After apologizing for disappointing those who had voted for him and those outside the Assembly who wished him to accept the post, he demanded a new election.

MOSCICKI ELECTED PRESIDENT

It was held next day, June 1, 1926, and Ignatius Moscicki, a prominent scientist and industrialist, who was a friend of the Marshal, was elected President on a second ballot by 281 votes to 200 for Bninski. In an interview next day Pilsudski spoke warmly of the new President as a "technician of the highest class, and possessed of a clear and methodical mind which would be brought to bear, in a salutary manner, on all questions concerning the political and economic life of the country." For his part Moscicki believed in Pilsudski as incarnating Poland in himself "as no other man in any other country incarnated his country." Pilsudski, he said, had only one thing before his eyes: the moral greatness of the State, its security, and the good of its people—nothing else mattered. Moscicki took the oath as President on June 4, and addressed a touching message to the nation, calling on it to make an immense effort for moral and material regeneration, and begging it to remember the recent dissensions only as incentives to collective work for Poland.

At the time of his election Moscicki was a professor in the University of Lwow. He was born on December 1, 1867, at

Mierzanowo, in the district of Plock; his father had taken part in the insurrection of 1863. Moscicki studied at Warsaw and later at the Riga polytechnic, where he specialized in chemistry. He returned to Warsaw, which he left for London in 1892, and there he remained for five years, engaged in perfecting himself in chemistry and physics. Thence he went to Fribourg, Switzerland, where he became Assistant Professor of Physics; four years afterwards he was Director of the laboratory of the University of Fribourg, and made several important inventions of an electro-chemical character. In 1913 he transferred his activities to Lwow, where he was appointed Professor of Electro-Chemistry. After the War he took charge of the chemical factories at Chorzow for the Polish Government; the factories had been built by the Germans in 1915, but were completely stripped by them when abandoning Poland. He re-equipped them in a very short time, and soon had them producing more than the Germans had succeeded in getting from them. He had written numerous works on his subjects which were greatly appreciated by foreign scientists.

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On Moscicki's election the Bartel Cabinet handed in its resignation, but the President asked Bartel to form another Ministry. On June 9 Bartel succeeded; the Government was composed mostly of the Ministers who had been associated with him before, the important exceptions being the Ministers of Finance and of Commerce and Industry; Klarner, formerly Minister of Commerce in the Grabski Government, became Finance Minister, and Kwiatkowski, an engineer and a director of the Chorzow factories, was Minister of Commerce. Almost from the start of his Ministerial career Kwiatkowski devoted a large part of his time and energy to the promotion of the construction of Gdynia, Poland's new port on the Baltic; in 1926 a second agreement was made with the Franco-Polish contractors already at work on the port, the building programme was enlarged,

and the actual construction was being carried on expeditiously and well, with 1930 set for its completion. In the Cabinet Zaleski, after a short interval, was Foreign Minister, and soon after his appointment he issued the important statement that no change would be made in foreign policy, thus squashing a rumour that Pilsudski did not favour the alliance with France—one of the strangest rumours current during the crisis and perhaps the most incredible, though another—that he had raided the Bank of Poland—ran it close.

Pilsudski retained the Ministry of War, and at the same time settled the long-disputed question of the High Command. Like the other members of the first Bartel Government (May 15 to June 1), he had resigned; on being invited by Bartel to resume the post, he conditioned his acceptance on the definitive solution of the question in the way he desired. Bartel and the other Ministers agreed to his proposal, which was to return to the decree he had issued on June 7, 1921, the decree that had been cancelled by the second Witos Government after the Marshal's withdrawal from the army. Reform of the Constitution, which had bulked so largely in Pilsudski's utterances, and which really meant a curtailment of the powers of the Sejm and the enhancement of those of the President, was taken in hand at once by the Government. A Bill was drafted and placed before the Sejm, which reassembled on June 22, 1926. Rataj had resigned the Speakership, on the ground that he wished to regain his full liberty in order to be able to reply to the attacks made on him for his actions during the "May Revolution." Daszynski, who was Vice-Marshal, took the chair, but Rataj was re-elected three days later by 176 votes to 159.

CONFIDENCE REVIVING

During the opening session of the Sejm, Klarnier, Finance Minister, made an exposition of the financial situation; he said that a last effort, which included a further compression of the expenditure, a ten per cent. increase of taxation, and a rise in the price of alcohol by the monopoly, would permit the

complete realization of Budgetary equilibrium—a happy result that, coupled with an active trade balance owing to exports exceeding imports, would exert a favourable influence on the zloty. In May the zloty had been as low as 11·10 to the dollar, but at the date of his speech it had gone up to 10 to the dollar. Thanks to the large exports that had gone on for months, the Bank of Poland had been able to increase substantially its reserves of gold or equivalents of gold, and was therefore in a better position to deal with the exchange situation. It looked, in fact, as if the zloty might stabilize itself at about 10 to the dollar with the help of the Bank.

Discussing the economic situation, Kwiatkowski said that it could be greatly improved, but that the rapidity with which the betterment would be obtained depended not only on what the Government was prepared to do, but in greater measure on the determination of the nation. The Government would encourage the development of agriculture and the industries derived from it—this came first in the Government's programme of economic restoration; but support would also be extended to the coal, mining, textile, oil and chemical industries, which, with agriculture, constituted, said the Minister, "the foundation of the industrial structure of the State." He wound up by remarking that a miracle could not be expected, but the situation would be solved by "good will, by methodical and resolute effort—in a word, by work." In July Bartel, speaking in the Sejm, gave a favourable estimate of the financial situation of the country, and spoke of the great animation pervading the national industries. Among these the coal industry, which had been seriously affected by the action of Germany in 1925, showed a remarkable expansion, largely due, however, to the opening of markets to Poland by the coal strike in Great Britain; in May, 1926, Poland exported 700,000 tons; in June, 1,400,000 tons, or double the former quantity. Unemployment had been reduced, he continued, and a credit of 20 million zlotys had done much for the relief of agriculture. The railways were paying better and some additions had been made to them.

Further signs of the Government's financial policy were, first,

the arrival of Kemmerer, with a staff of American experts, at Warsaw on July 3, to renew his investigation of the financial and economic situation, and second, the conclusion of agreements with Harriman, the American financier, respecting the exploitation of the Giesche mines in Upper Silesia. On July 19 negotiations were begun once more for a Polish-German commercial treaty at Berlin—another indication of better times in Poland, since these blunted the edge of the “economic war” as a weapon against her. Within Poland herself some return of confidence was undoubtedly observable.

CONSTITUTION MODIFIED BY THE SEYM

But outrivalling finance in interest for the Sejm was the Constitutional question. During July, 1926, the Sejm examined the draft of the reform drawn up by the Government and embodying some at least of the ideas of Pilsudski: it had also under consideration the draft of a Bill for conferring “Full Powers” on the Government; a Commission had reported on both of these Bills and made amendments to them. Two parties of the Right and two of the Centre made proposals of their own respecting the reform of the Constitution, and also demanded a revision of the electoral law by reducing the numbers of deputies and senators. Daszynski for the Socialists denounced the Government’s reform measure and called for its rejection. But on July 22, 1926, an Act was passed, mainly on the lines of the Government draft, by 246 votes to 95, the majority including members of all the parties except the Socialist and some of the National Minority groups. At the same session the Sejm passed the Act of Full Powers, the same parties voting for or against it. Together these measures effected something in the nature of a political revolution, for they exalted the Executive at the expense of the Legislative; the Sejm lost much of its power, if not all of its predominance. It was not to be supposed that the Sejm enjoyed being shorn, but it accepted the changes—because of Pilsudski, who not only had the army behind him, but had the support generally of public opinion in Poland.



M. IGNACE MOSCICKI
The Third President of Poland

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NEW CONSTITUTIONAL ACT

Moscicki promulgated the new Constitutional Act on August 2, 1926. It contained four main provisions. The first limited the rights of Parliament with respect to the Budget; if within a period of five months the Budget was not passed, the draft Governmental Budget (Finance Bill) acquired the force of law; if Parliament was dissolved without passing the Budget, the Government was given the right to fall back on the Budget of the previous year. It was also provided that if the Parliament was dissolved without voting the military contingent for the year, the Government had the right to call up a contingent similar to that voted the previous year. The second main provision was the most important of the four; it gave the President the right to dissolve Parliament on the proposal of the Government if unanimous, the new elections taking place within ninety days. The third provision authorized the President to issue decrees, having the force of law, until the new Parliament was in session, reservations being made respecting any changes in the Constitution and the electoral law. The fourth provision was that a motion for the retirement of the Government or for that of one of its Ministers could not be voted on in the course of the sitting during which it was made.

The Act conferring Full Powers, also put into force on August 2, 1926, by its promulgation by the President, authorized the President to promulgate decrees having the force of law, till the meeting of the new Parliament (which took place in 1928), respecting (1) putting in force laws in accordance with the Constitution, and giving effect to its stipulations regarding special laws; (2) the reorganization and simplification of the administration of the State, and the putting in order of the legislation of the country; (3) the regulation of the administration of justice and social work; (4) the balancing of the Budget, the stabilization of the currency, and the amelioration of the economic situation, particularly touching agriculture and silviculture. There were certain reservations regarding the introduction of new taxation, changing the electoral law, and

so on. But the net effect of these laws was clear; the rights of the Polish Parliament—in brief, of the Sejm—were limited, and the Executive, hitherto subordinate, became the fundamental element in the political life of the nation instead of the Legislature. But the Sejm still had considerable powers, as was presently seen; the Government collectively and its Ministers individually were still responsible to it; the majority of its members were far from being supporters of Pilsudski and asserted themselves accordingly, once their fear of the Marshal had passed.

PILSUDSKI GIVEN THE HIGH COMMAND

Pilsudski was only partly satisfied with these new laws, but he obtained all he wanted with respect to the High Command. On August 7, 1926, President Moscicki issued a decree settling the question of the High Command in accordance with the agreement made by the Government when the Marshal accepted the Ministry of War in June. This decree stated that the President, as the supreme chief of the army, exercised its command through the Minister of War, and issued such decrees respecting it as did not need legislative action; named and dismissed the Inspector-General of the Army, the Under-Secretaries of the War Ministry, and the Chief of the General Staff—in virtue of a resolution of the Cabinet on the proposal of the War Minister—as well as the heads of divisions and other superior officers—also on the proposal of the War Minister. The War Minister became the effective chief of the army in time of peace, and the Inspector-General was designated as Commander-in-Chief in time of war, with the General Staff under his orders, and all nominations to colonelcies or higher ranks made in agreement with him. Naturally Pilsudski made himself Inspector-General as well as Minister of War, and the army was entirely in his hands; otherwise it was completely withdrawn from political interference.

With the passing of the army into the strong grasp of its first Marshal, the May Revolution came practically to a close. New political bases for the government of the country had

been established, but the financial and economic situation, though improved and improving, still left much to be desired. It was scarcely to be denied that the badness of that situation, and the resulting depression from which Poland had suffered, had produced an atmosphere conducive to the success of Pilsudski's *coup d'état*. For the continuance of Pilsudski's success in the political field there had also to be success in the financial and economic domains. Since early in July Kemmerer and his corps of American experts had been very busy; they had made a thorough exploration of the situation, and had conferred with Government officials, bankers, and representative industrialists and agriculturists. In September Kemmerer's report, a voluminous and elaborate affair, was submitted to the Polish Government, which accepted many of its recommendations, one of the most important being that the zloty should be stabilized at its current value, then ranging between 9 and 10 to the dollar, with a rising tendency. The Sejm, after the summer vacation, resumed its sittings on September 20, 1926, and Klarner immediately put before it the draft of the Budget for the fourth quarter of the year. He said that there had not been equilibrium in the preceding quarter, but such an amelioration was now taking place that it was certain for the fourth quarter. Unemployment had again fallen; in January the figure had stood at 360,000, and was now down to 235,000. The reserves of the Bank of Poland had again increased. Exports continued to rise in proportion to imports; the trade balance amounted to 500 million zlotys for the eight months of the year. "The Budget," he stated, "will be made to correspond with the people's capacity to pay." There were lively discussions in the Sejm, which by this time had recovered something of its former independence—and was minded to show that it retained some power.

THIRD BARTEL CABINET

The Socialists and the Left generally supported the Government draft; some parties were against it; finally the Sejm voted

the draft, with a minor exception, but afterwards a motion was carried, by large majorities, of non-confidence in two of the members of the Government—the Ministers of Education and of the Interior—with the result that the Bartel Government resigned. President Moscicki accepted its resignation, but forthwith asked Bartel to form another Cabinet, which he did on September 27, 1926, by composing it of the same Ministers as before. Next day the Senate began its consideration of the draft Budget; a motion by the National Democrats for its rejection in its entirety was defeated by 44 votes to 36, but another motion, by the same party, to reduce the credits demanded by the Government was carried by 40 votes to 37. When the Bill came up again in the Sejm—September 30—the amendment made by the Senate was ratified by 206 votes to 94, with four abstaining. The majority in this case was made up of the National Democrats, the Christian Nationalists, the Christian Democrats, the Witos Populists, the National Workers, and the National Minority groups; the minority comprised the Socialists, the Populist *Wyzwolenie* Peasant party and the Work Club. The Bartel Government again resigned, and Moscicki accepted its resignation.

FIRST PILSUDSKI CABINET

Political excitement rose high in Warsaw once more. The majority against the Government, or in other words against Marshal Pilsudski, was composed of that combination of the Right and the Centre which, under Witos, had been put down by the *coup d'état*; and its action in the Sejm was a declaration by it of open hostility to him. There was much talk of a dissolution of Parliament—it was within the power of the President under the amended Constitution; the Right and the Centre played for it in the belief that a new Parliament would be anti-Pilsudskist, and change, if not cancel, the recent Constitutional alterations, which they detested. The Left still supported Pilsudski, though he had disappointed it by his non-adherence to its ideas and programme. Pilsudski himself had no notion

of dissolving the Parliament—only to have it replaced by another on the old lines he hated. Though he was master of the army, and in that way master of Poland, he had no intention of destroying either the Constitution or the Parliament; the former had been modified in the direction he wished; the latter, along with the nation, had to be educated, and for that time was necessary. Moscicki asked him to form a Government, and he consented to do so, to the joy of his friends and the chagrin of his enemies. On October 2, 1926, he constituted a Cabinet, with himself as Prime Minister and War Minister, Bartel as Vice-Premier and Minister of Education, Zaleski as Foreign Minister (on October 5), Slawoj-Skladkowski as Minister of the Interior, Czechowicz as Finance Minister, and Kwiatkowski as Minister of Commerce and Industry. Among the other members of the Government were two Conservatives and a Socialist; in fact, this administration was a sort of Cabinet of National Union, for it included men from the Right, the Centre and the Left, but all of them were believers in Pilsudski and independent of their parties. Pilsudski was looking beyond all the parties; his Government rested on no combination of parties, but on men in them who had faith in him and his policies. Before the *coup d'état*, what might be called the Pilsudski question divided the Right and the Left; after it all the parties were split up more or less by that question. The first step of the new Government was to adjourn the Sejm for a month—it resumed in mid-November.

POLES A UNIT ON FOREIGN POLICY

However much the Poles were divided on internal policy, they were virtually a unit on foreign policy. During the May Revolution and the period that followed up to the meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations in September, the claim of Poland to a permanent seat in the Council had by no means been lost sight of. Zaleski, on July 21, voiced the opinion of the whole country when he said to the Foreign Commission of the Sejm:

The geographical situation of Poland, the territory she occupies, the extent of her population (which was increasing at the rate of 400,000 a year), and her importance as a political factor in the ensemble of the economic relations of Europe, assign to her a high rôle in world politics—so high a rôle that it is impossible to imagine any solution of the problem of the general peace without her active and permanent participation. Only the permanent collaboration of Poland in the Council of the League of Nations will permit the League to fulfil, completely and fruitfully, the rôle to which it is called in virtue of the fundamental principles of the Covenant.

POLAND GETS RENEWABLE THREE YEARS' SEAT IN
LEAGUE COUNCIL

The commission constituted by the Council to inquire into the question of the enlargement of its membership had recommended the addition of three non-permanent seats. Brazil carried out her threat to withdraw from the League; Spain also withdrew in September. When the Assembly met—Zaleski was Poland's representative—it was evident that the League had passed safely through the storm that had looked so threatening in March. Germany was admitted by a unanimous vote of the 48 States represented, and given a permanent seat in the Council on September 8. The Assembly adopted the recommendation of the commission respecting the enlargement of the Council, and made the total number of seats 14, of which 9 were non-permanent. Germany now being a member, 49 States took part in the election, and of these 45, which included Germany, voted to give Poland a non-permanent seat. Another vote attributed a non-permanent seat for three years to Poland, 44 States supporting her. After all the seats, and the length of time they were to be occupied, had been decided, Nintchitch, the President, announced that Poland had asked to be declared re-eligible at the end of the three-years' period, in conformity with the new regulations that had been adopted for membership; 48 States were present at the voting, but only 44 voted; Poland to succeed required a majority of two-thirds, and actually obtained 36 votes, or six more than necessary; eight States voted against her, but as the voting was secret their names were unknown. Zaleski was

satisfied; he maintained that by being declared re-eligible Poland had gained what was equivalent to a permanent seat, but all the same, he said, she would not relinquish the prospect of seeing re-eligibility transformed at some future time into permanence.

"KING OF POLAND" RUMOURS

Towards the end of October, 1926, there were rumours that Pilsudski intended to make himself King of Poland. These were occasioned by a visit he paid to Nieswicz, an ancestral residence of the Radziwills, his ostensible object being the decoration with a military order of the grave of Prince Stanislas Radziwill, an *aide* of his, who had fallen in battle in 1920 during the war with Soviet Russia. Pilsudski was accompanied by two of the members of the Government, and he found assembled at Nieswicz a large number of the Polish aristocracy and gentry, including Prince Janus Radziwill, the head of this branch of his house, who gave him a warm welcome. Pilsudski, a democrat in much, did not restore the kingship, and his visit was explained by his wish to give to his Government as wide a base as possible of patriotic union; he desired the co-operation of these Conservatives, as of others, in his work for the good of their common country.

THE SEYM DEFIANT

When the Sejm resumed on November 13, 1926, President Moscicki informed it that its task would be the examination of the Budget, as submitted by the Government, for the year April 1, 1927, to March 31, 1928. On this occasion the members of Parliament met at the Royal Castle to hear the President's message, and a Government order had directed them to stand while he was speaking; the Sejm had objected, as this ceremonial appeared to emphasize the new power of the Executive, and many deputies absented themselves. A decree issued on November 4 restricted the "liberties of the Press," and penalized the spreading of false news; this was described by

some journalists as "gagging the Press in a manner equalled only in Russia and Italy." The Socialists, who had supported the May Revolution, turned their backs on Pilsudski, and were loud in their complaints. There was continuous excitement in political circles, but at the same time Pilsudski continued to have the support of all those—and they were many—who were disgusted with the ineptitude of the Sejm. There also were advocates of Fascism as well as monarchy.

Dmowski, who had taken little direct part in politics since his short tenure of the Foreign Ministry in 1923, was abroad when the *coup d'état* took place. On his return home he maintained an attitude of reserve at first, but after the Nieswiez meeting he published an article, entitled "The Crumbling of the Nation," in the *Gazeta Warszawska*, in which he said that the parties of the Centre and the Left were in perpetual flux, the Right alone being organized. All parties had respectable ideas, but there could not well be a party corresponding to each idea. A grouping of parties was required—the "Nation had to be organized." This, of course, was exactly what was being done, explicitly or implicitly, by Pilsudski, but Dmowski ignored it. To help Dmowski's campaign the National Democrats asserted that he had never been regarded as belonging only to one party; and early in December, 1926, an organization was formed at Poznan called *Oboz Wielkiej Polski* (The Camp of Great Poland), but it was composed almost exclusively of National Democrats, and did not attract to itself either the Warsaw or the Cracow Conservatives, many of whom adhered to Pilsudski. What the Camp did was to try to influence the masses in view of the approach of the general election.

While these various political tides were flowing and ebbing in Poland the Sejm discussed the Budget, but easily found time in between to pass unanimously a resolution abrogating the Presidential decree limiting the liberties of the Press—another evidence of the Sejm's defiance of the Government. In his presentation of the Budget Czechowicz took a very favourable view of the financial and economic situation; among other things he stated that the Government, "far from aggra-

vating the fiduciary inflation, had reduced the number of small Treasury notes in circulation." The question to consider was the stabilization of the zloty and a large foreign loan to effect it, but the Government did not intend to pay too high a price for the loan. He thought there were too many small banks in the country, many of which were kept alive artificially; their number would be reduced. The situation was better, but there was still much to do, and hard work was essential.

QUESTION OF GERMAN DISARMAMENT

During December and for some weeks in January, 1927, Polish opinion was deeply concerned with the question of the disarmament of Germany. On January 31 the Inter-Allied Military Commission, which had functioned in Germany since the Armistice, would be withdrawn, and instead of there being a permanent control, there would be only the possibility of investigations by the Council of the League of Nations. In Poland it was known that Germany had not only not demolished the fortifications which had existed in 1919 at Königsberg, Küstrin and Glogau, but had strengthened them. To the Sejm's Financial Commission Pilsudski declared that Poland must have a considerable army, notwithstanding the great cost incurred, because the German Army still existed. Zaleski, speaking to the Sejm's Foreign Commission, said on January 4 that it was impossible to pass over in silence some disquieting tendencies in Germany as against Poland. He also referred to recent events in Lithuania—the revolution headed by Smetona which had overthrown the Slezevicius Government in December, and brought Valdemaras to the front—and denied that Poland intended to interfere. He reaffirmed Poland's readiness to conclude a treaty with Soviet Russia giving guarantees respecting frontiers. He stated Poland was determined to abstain from all activities against the peace of Europe.

Zaleski also said that Poland thought that all the stipulations of the Versailles Treaty concerning German disarmament ought to be complied with. On January 9, in a speech delivered

at a banquet given by the Association for the study of International Problems, he alluded to rumours circulating throughout Europe of possible changes in the territorial status resulting from the World War being under discussion, and declared emphatically that nobody in Poland would ever consent to buy good relations with the "western neighbour" at the price of a revision of frontiers. "We shall not cede an inch of Pomerania or Silesia. . . . Everybody knows that these territories are essentially Polish, and Poland cannot do without them. . . . Every Pole will sacrifice his blood and his fortune to defend them from all assaults, no matter whence they come." The Polish Government made strong representations in Paris respecting the German fortifications, which Poland could not but regard as a threat. Negotiations followed between the Allies and Germany; the result was a compromise in February which satisfied Foch if it did not quite satisfy Poland: part of the fortifications at Königsberg, Küstrin and Glogau were to be (and were) demolished.

One of the reactions of this success of Poland was that the *pourparlers* that had been going on intermittently between her and Germany for a commercial treaty were again suspended, the reason advanced by Germany being the old one of the right of expulsion, which was further complicated by the deportation of four German railwaymen from Upper Silesia. In the reply of the Polish Government to a German Note on this subject, it was pointed out that recently Germany had expelled 25,000 Polish workers, though they had lived a long time on German territory. When Germany demanded that this question should be settled before proceeding with the commercial treaty, Poland replied that such a demand was inadmissible. In March, however, as a consequence of conversations at Geneva between Zaleski and Stresemann, German Foreign Minister, the negotiations were reopened, but within a few weeks were threatened with interruption by a speech made by Hergt, German Minister of Justice and Vice-Chancellor, at Beuthen, in German Upper Silesia, in which he said that Germany claimed the return to her of Polish Upper

Silesia. It was explained that Hergt was not speaking officially, but as an individual. The Polish Government made inquiries at Berlin, and was assured by Stresemann that Germany had not changed her policy, which was that of Locarno, and that the newspapers had invested the speech with an importance it did not possess. The negotiations for a commercial treaty continued.

SUMMARY CLOSE OF THE SEYM

Meanwhile the Budget had been passed by the Sejm. In the course of the session other subjects, such as Electoral Reform, had been discussed, but as soon as the Budget was settled—on March 22, 1927—Parliament was closed by a Presidential decree, as it had accomplished the work assigned to it by the Government. This summary stop to its activities was resented by many Parliamentarians as another blow at the Sejm by Pilsudski—as it undoubtedly was, but it was in accordance with the Constitution as reformed in the preceding year. There had been various incidents during the session, most of them of unimportance, but a sensation was produced when in January five members of the Sejm were arrested, despite their Parliamentary immunity, on the charge of being concerned in a plot aiming at a Communist revolution and the establishment of an independent White Russia on Communist principles. Numerous arrests of suspects in Warsaw and in the country followed, and stores of ammunition and compromising documents were found in their possession. In March the Minister of the Interior issued an order, declaring illegal the White Russian Hramada, the organization that was behind the plot; at the same time a Communist peasant group was put under the ban. With the closing of Parliament—it did not meet again till June—the Government, through all its Ministries, went on energetically carrying out the programme of intensive work and reorganization embodying the Pilsudski policies. The various new organizations that had been brought into existence, such as the Economic Committee, the Financial Council and the Council for National Defence, were actively engaged in their

several fields. The whole administration had been speeded up by the removal of incompetents, and the improvement in the State's financial position, which was very evident in 1927, was reflected in an increase in the salaries of officials. A Loan Commission went to the United States and put fresh life into the negotiations for a large stabilization loan which had been proceeding for some months.

ASSASSINATION OF VOIKOFF

Poland's relations with Soviet Russia, which despite some untoward affairs had somewhat improved, suddenly became strained when Voikoff, Soviet Minister in Warsaw, was assassinated at Warsaw railway station on June 7, 1927, by a young Russian *émigré* called Koverda. Shortly before this unfortunate event, for which the Polish Government hastened to express its regret to the Soviet Government, Great Britain had broken off relations with Moscow, and the Soviet was in an angry mood, for the British action not only weakened its international position, but told against it in Russia. Only a short time before it had felt itself strong enough to suggest the signing of Pacts of Non-Aggression with Poland and other Baltic States. It now seized on Voikoff's assassination as an opportunity to reassert itself, and addressed a very strong Note to Warsaw stating that Poland must be held responsible for the outrage, as she harboured Russian counter-revolutionaries in her territory. The Polish Government replied that it was horrified by the assassination, but pointed out that in affording asylum to *émigrés* of various nationalities Poland followed international usage; on the other hand, she did not permit the existence on her territory of organizations directed against foreign States. Poland refused to accept responsibility, particularly as Voikoff had declined the personal protection she had offered him. More Notes were exchanged. Poland offered to give money compensation to the family of Voikoff, but the offer was rejected. The assassin was put on his trial, found guilty, and sentenced to life imprisonment—afterwards reduced

to 15 years' imprisonment on account of his youth. Moscow continued to rage, but quieted down when Patek, Polish Minister at Moscow, acting on Pilsudski's instructions, told the Soviet: "In attempting to humiliate Poland without reason, you only incur the risk of humiliating yourself, since you have not sufficient force behind your threats, which you know as well as we do. We have done everything that is reasonable to give you satisfaction, and now we must courteously urge you to let the matter drop, because if regrettable incidents follow you alone will be responsible."

"THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE"

An extremely short extraordinary session of Parliament was held in June to consider a Socialist amendment to the Constitution providing that the Sejm had the right to dissolve itself on its own authority. The Sejm passed it by 189 votes to 10, with 26 abstentions, but when it came before the Senate in July it met with a summary fate, for Parliament was dissolved by a Presidential decree. This attempt of the Sejm to regain some of its lost power came to nothing, but it indicated another phase in the Constitutional struggle. The Sejm had also to take note of the fact that a fresh Presidential decree respecting the Press, and another decree relative to the propagation of false news, on the lines to which it had objected in December, 1926, had come into force early in June. The Sejm took the stand that it could abrogate a decree by a simple vote of the Chamber, but the Government held that abrogation would be effective only if the full legislative process, which included action by the Senate, was completed. The Sejm was constantly reminded by the Government that there was in reality no Constitutional struggle, because the Government was careful to keep within the existing Constitution as amended—which was the case, but could not preclude efforts to revise that Constitution, and in that sense there was a Constitutional struggle; it went on developing with growing acerbity on the part of the Sejm. Another extraordinary session—these were

called according to the Constitution by the President on the demand of more than one-third of the members of the Sejm—was held in September 19, 1927. The decree respecting the Press was debated and a Socialist resolution condemning it was adopted. The National Democrats tabled several motions hostile to the Government, one of which aimed at the abolition of the Act conferring Full Powers on the Government. But next day Parliament was adjourned for thirty days by decree of the President—again a proceeding within his competence according to the Constitution.

GREAT STABILIZATION LOAN

Cutting across the struggle between the Sejm and the Pilsudski Government came the good news of the successful issue of the negotiations for the large stabilization loan, a witness at once to the enhanced standing abroad of Poland due to the great improvement of her financial and economic position, and to the confidence which the Pilsudski Government inspired abroad. On October 15, 1927, Poland contracted this loan for the purpose, among other things, of obtaining funds to enable her to carry out a Plan of Stabilization, a programme for which had been established by Presidential decree two days earlier—"with the view to stabilizing the zloty on a gold basis, establishing Poland's credit at home and abroad, and ensuring a solid foundation for the economic development of the country." The plan of stabilization had been accepted by a group of American banks and financiers; the loan was for 72 million dollars, of which 47 million dollars were taken in New York, 2 million pounds sterling in London, and 15 million dollars in France, Holland, Switzerland, Sweden and Poland. The plan included the appointment for three years of an American adviser, and Charles S. Dewey, Assistant Secretary of the United States Treasury, was accepted for this post, which also covered his becoming a Director of the Bank of Poland.

By the stabilization plan the zloty was established at a little

under nine zlotys—8.914—to the dollar, which had been about its exchange value for some time previously (43.381 zlotys to the pound sterling). From the proceeds of the loan the capital of the Bank of Poland was increased by 75 million zlotys; one-half—140 million zlotys—of the small Treasury notes were retired from circulation, and provision was made for converting the other half into silver coins; the floating debt of the Treasury amounting to 25 millions was paid off and 75 millions were allocated to Treasury Reserve; upwards of 140 millions were assigned to economic development—later this sum was increased by 32 millions from the profit on the seignorage of the silver coinage. Under an Act passed in October, 1926, the Polish Government had renounced its right to issue paper money; the plan killed this form of inflation. The plan contained a statement of the various Budgetary, fiscal and administrative measures which the Polish Government undertook to implement the conditions determining in part the procurement of the loan. The Adviser's function was to assist and advise the Government, with the Ministry of Finance as intermediary, concerning all measures relating to the realization of the plan. The loan was floated with great success on the international market.

BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

On October 21, 1927, the Sejm, again in session, examined the draft of the Budget for April 1, 1928, to March 31, 1929, which had been submitted by the Government. The estimated revenue was 2,350 million zlotys, the expenditure 2,228 millions, with a surplus of 121 millions. In the expenditure were included 70 millions for the amortization of the Stabilization Loan, and an increase of 30 millions in the credits of the Ministry of Public Works, to be spent on improving communications. The heads of the party groups met to arrange a course of proceeding respecting the Budget, of which they complained Parliament was not given full particulars, but their discussions were concerned much more with the consideration

of tactics against the Government than with the actual Budget. The National Democrats and the Socialists thought it would be better to leave the Budget severely alone, on the ground that the form in which it was presented did not satisfy the principle of Parliamentary control; the moderate parties were in favour of going on with the Budget in so far as the information given would enable them to examine it. Rataj, the Speaker of the Sejm, suggested discussion of the provisional (monthly) Budgets. But no decision was reached then, or next day; after consulting the members of the parties, Rataj proposed to refer the matter to the Sejm in full session—this was done; a Presidential decree adjourning the Sejm to November 28 did the rest, as this was equivalent to its dissolution, for the mandate it had been given in 1922 expired on that day by effluxion of time. In the evening the party groups excitedly discussed the action of the Government, but failed to reach agreement regarding any concerted move against it. The general election was set for February, 1928.

POLISH PACT OF NON-AGGRESSION

In the second half of 1927 Polish foreign policy was chiefly interested in the League of Nations, Germany and, above all, Lithuania. At the September Assembly of the League Sokal, Polish Minister at Geneva, submitted a Pact of Non-Aggression, which had been the subject of negotiations that had somewhat modified its original form, and which ultimately took the shape of a Resolution passed unanimously on September 24 to the effect that wars of aggression were prohibited, and that only pacific means were to be employed for the regulation of all differences between States—a forerunner of the Briand-Kellogg Pact of 1928 renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. Poland also took her share in the League's deliberations on the question of Disarmament—deliberations of a prodigious but not unnatural sterility, in view of the uncertainties of the international political situation, of which an instance was the maintenance of a "state of war" by

Lithuania against Poland. The League also dealt with the question respecting the nationality of school children in Upper Silesia, whether Polish or German, by accepting Stresemann's proposal to refer it to The Hague Court (which rendered a decision in favour of Poland in 1928). Danzig, as usual, made its appearance in the proceedings of the League, but a change in the composition of the Government of the Free City, and the floating of a loan for it guaranteed by Poland, tended to better relations between the Danzigers and the Poles. The commerce of the port had grown enormously owing to the economic recovery of Poland, and kept on growing; Gdynia, too, was growing and giving Danzig to think—not as yet furiously, but much less decisively than before.

PILSUDSKI'S "IS IT PEACE?" TO LITHUANIA

Towards the end of the year it was Lithuania that chiefly attracted attention in Poland and the League of Nations, as elsewhere. In October news had reached Poland from Kovno, the Lithuanian capital, that the Lithuanian Government had published ordinances aiming at the destruction of Polish schools in Lithuania, and that Polish teachers were imprisoned in concentration camps where they were treated as common malefactors. The report excited indignation in Poland, particularly as the Pilsudski Government pursued a policy of conciliation towards Lithuania and the Lithuanians living in Poland; it retaliated by closing 29 Lithuanian schools in the Vilna district. The Lithuanian Government lodged a complaint with the League, and the Council considered the question in December, 1927. Poland had previously addressed a Note to the Council in which the opinion was expressed that an end should be put to the "state of war" maintained by Lithuania against her.

On December 7 the Council heard Valdemaras for Lithuania and Zaleski for Poland, and referred the question to Beelaerts van Blokland, Dutch Foreign Minister, for a report on it; conversations took place respecting the subject in private

among the statesmen assembled at Geneva; a special interest was imparted to the whole affair by the presence of Pilsudski, who arrived in the city on December 9. Next day the Marshal, impatient with the hesitations of Valdemaras, demanded of him in the Council Chamber: "Is it peace or war?" "It is peace," Valdemaras replied. "In that case," said Pilsudski, "I have nothing more to do here," and turning to Zaleski he requested him to put this agreement in an appropriate formula. Beelaerts presented his report accompanied by a proposed resolution embodying its finding. The Poles offered some small amendments, but Valdemaras made demands which they could not accept; the situation again became tense. Late in the evening, however, both sides concurred in adopting a resolution, which the Council unanimously endorsed, to the effect that Lithuania was no longer in a "state of war" against Poland; that Poland recognized and would respect the complete independence and territorial integrity of Lithuania; it recommended the two States to begin direct negotiations to establish good relations between them, and offered the good offices of the League to facilitate these; it referred the Lithuanian complaint to a committee of inquiry, and decided that frontier incidents should be investigated, on the request of either State, by the officers of the League. The resolution concluded by stating that it did not affect in any way the questions on which the two States held divergent views—an allusion to Vilna. Pilsudski shook hands with Valdemaras after the meeting; in any case the "state of war" was ended; what was to take its place? A hopeful indication was that Zaleski and Valdemaras arranged for a conference to be held at Riga in January, 1928, thus initiating those direct negotiations which the Council had recommended.

CHAPTER IX

THE PILSUDSKI RÉGIME

1928-1931

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POLISH political life was immediately and deeply affected by the dissolution of the Parliament. The Pilsudski Government, of which the Bartel Governments which preceded it might be regarded as mere preliminary phases, had now been before the country for about a year and a half, and had given it something more than a taste of its quality. Apart from the army, the care of which the Marshal regarded as specially his own, it was easy to see that what lay at the bottom of Pilsudski's policy was his dread of anarchy—the anarchy which had been fatal to Old Poland, as it rendered her an easy prey to greedy and unscrupulous neighbours—and his determination to make, so far as it was in his power, the New Poland different in that fundamental respect from the State of the tragic Three Partitions. As he said, more than once, when stating his point of view, "I am a soldier"—meaning thereby that he knew the supreme value of order, discipline and obedience.

The results of his administration, though of course not all due to him or it, were patent in the better government of the country, as well as in its financial and economic progress. The May Revolution had been a success in itself and in its consequences. The strengthening of the Executive, with a corresponding reduction of the power of the Legislative, had undoubtedly been beneficial. The amelioration of the financial and economic situation was seen in the increase of the revenue; the growing prosperity of Poland added to the income and the consumption of the people, and caused nearly every tax, monopoly and profit-making enterprise to bring in more than had been estimated in the Budget. The zloty was stable. Inflation was ended. And if things were thus much better at

home, the position and prestige of Poland abroad had likewise been enhanced. In sum, the record of the Pilsudski Government was good, though its contest with the Parliament, or more accurately the struggle of the Sejm against it, had to be taken into account. The Parliament, however, had lived out its full term. Pilsudski had not crushed it any more than he had abrogated the Constitution; he could have done both. Now, there was to be a new Sejm and a new Senate with a fresh mandate. The question before the country was one of absolute simplicity—Pilsudski, yes or no?

FOR OR AGAINST PILSUDSKI

Parties of the Right, the Centre and the Left at once "took position," but that process of disintegration referred to in the preceding chapter made itself more and more marked. In the Right there were inveterate enemies of the Marshal who denied him any merit and accused him of sacrificing Poland to his personal ambition and lust for power, but the Right was no longer solid, and many of its former partisans went over to Pilsudski. The Centre wavered, but on the whole was against the Marshal. The Left, of whom he had long been the idol, was against him, though there were defections even from its ranks. As the Right had been persistently hostile, Pilsudski in the past had supported himself on the Left, but he could look to it no longer. It was in these circumstances that those who believed in him and his leadership—it was a strongly personal movement which put the man, or the hero, Pilsudski first, and regarded his policies as emanations of his genius—had formed a body to assist him. It was known as the "Non-party Block of Co-operation with the Government," and was popularly styled the *Sanacja* (Sanitation Party). He had nothing to do with its organization, but its chiefs, such as Slawek and Prystor, were imbued with the spirit of the old legionaries who had fought under him; it was, however, drawn from, and was intended to be drawn from, all classes of the community and all the political groups who found a unity in him and his

ideas, summarized in the moral and political regeneration of the State, the cultivation of the sense of public duty and the necessary national discipline.

INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT

Shortly after the dissolution of the Parliament Pilsudski received powerful support from the industrial element in Poland; it published a statement setting forth its views on the economic and political situation and the general principles and reforms which might serve as the basis of an electoral block. It insisted that the Pilsudski Government had brought order, stability and continuity to production and to the exchange. It declared that the Parliament had not responded to the hopes that had been entertained of it; its demagogic tendencies and the gaps in its work had caused the loss of its authority in the country. The fault, it suggested, did not lie so much with the members of the Parliament as with the system by which they were elected; a reform in this respect was essential. It enumerated other reforms: extension of the powers of the President; enlargement of the powers of the Senate, with its members elected on a plan entirely different from that in use; votes of censure, to have effect, must be passed by both Sejm and Senate, not by the Sejm alone; and the institution of a Constitutional Tribunal. These reforms, it added, would assure equilibrium between the public powers—Executive and Legislative—and also between theoretical conceptions, which had reigned hitherto, and political realities. This was largely the Pilsudski gospel.

ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH

As was to be expected in Poland with her deeply religious population, the Church had something to say about the elections, and early in December, 1927, the two cardinals and all the archbishops and bishops of Poland issued a pastoral urging the faithful to unity, and warning them against two dangers

which might give an unfavourable turn to the elections and contribute to subversive elements; one was abstaining from voting—they ought to vote—and the other was scattering their votes instead of supporting a common Catholic programme. The pastoral concluded by inviting them to wage an energetic fight in common against “the greatest danger which menaces the World and, in particular, Poland—Communism, whose propaganda seeks to contaminate our souls.” The action of the Episcopate was not without an effect on the electoral campaign. It led to a coming together of some of the Conservatives who were greatly attached to the Church. The Right saw in it a means of furthering the collaboration of all of its partisans in the absence of a programme of such an extended character as would unite diverse views and tendencies not easy to reconcile.

In mid-December, 1927, there was talk of consolidating the groups of the Right and the Centre into a Catholic Block, the Christian Democrats taking the lead in the matter, but there was a good deal of shifting about among the parties interested until the National Democrats, hitherto known as the National Populist Union, or simply the Nationalists, in the politics of Poland after the Liberation, transformed themselves without co-operating with the Christian Democrats into the National Catholic Block. Naturally enough, the pastoral had its repercussions among the supporters of Pilsudski, and these led to explanations which modified its results. In Poznan, Pomorze (Pomerania) and some western parts of Galicia the *Sanacja* took on the form of a “Catholic Union of the Western Provinces,” with Catholic candidates who were also Conservatives. As the campaign proceeded the Right disclosed itself as consisting of the National Democrats and the Christian Nationalists; the Christian Democrats moved towards the Centre and the Witos Populists or Moderate Peasant Party. Taken together the Right and the Centre represented that “Witos majority” which had opposed the Marshal and his policies in the Sejm, and in the elections they came out against him.

GOVERNMENT "DIRECTION"

Complaints were made of the intervention of Government officials and prominent members of the Government Block in the course of the campaign; it was said that there was petty oppression by minor Pilsudskists of their political enemies—the pinpricks of jacks in office; but there was certainly no wide, far less general, interference with public liberties, the usual accompaniment of out-and-out dictatorships. Pilsudski himself disclaimed dictatorship, but he believed that the mass of the Polish democracy was politically ill-informed and needed guidance—he was out to educate it, to fit it to play its part in the political life of the State. Thus the mayors and headmen in country places were instructed to explain to the peasants the advantages to be expected from their voting the Pilsudski ticket; on the other hand, the Opposition did not hesitate to exploit the fears of the peasants which arose from their ignorance, and suggested all sorts of dark possibilities.

Education, except among the aristocracy and the professional classes, had been very low—almost non-existent—in pre-War Poland. But even under the limited rule of the Polish Governments permitted in the Austro-German Kingdom during the War efforts had been made to establish schools. Since the Liberation, these efforts had been intensified by the successive Governments of the restored State, and schools were multiplied by hundreds all over the country. But the great bulk of the peasantry which went to the polls in 1928 were too old to have benefited from the schools. It was not difficult for demagogues to take advantage of their lack of knowledge and their suspicion, inbred in the old days and still persistent, of any and every sort of Government. In the upshot cunning misrepresentation led numbers of them to vote against Pilsudski while all the time they believed they were voting for him. On the whole the action of the Government did not go beyond what was legitimate. At the polls there was no interference; their secrecy was not violated, and no one was compelled to vote the Government ticket or list.

NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARIES

GENERAL ELECTION, 1928

The elections for the Sejm took place on March 4, 1928, and those for the Senate exactly a week later. Though not an absolute victory, the result was a great triumph for Pilsudski. The Government Block, the new Pilsudskist organization, obtained, on May 4, 135 seats, chiefly at the expense of the Right and Centre—this was the outstanding feature of the day. It was against this combination of the Right and Centre that Pilsudski had intervened and effected the May Revolution. In the second Sejm the Right and Centre had disposed of about 230 votes; in the elections they lost nearly 150 seats, and it was impossible not to see in this fact that the country had given a verdict for Pilsudski. The most enthusiastic of his followers had not hoped for anything so sweeping. The Warsaw Correspondent of *The Times*, in a dispatch dated March 7, 1928, and published in the paper next day, said: "The abuses that were practised by the Administration in its conduct of the Government's election campaign cannot detract from the significance of the result, which is at once a tribute to the Marshal's personality and a recognition of the solid achievements standing to the credit of his Government. The remnants of the old order in Polish politics have been heavily defeated by a popular vote."

There was, however, another side to the elections for the Sejm. The Left had made some gains; the Radical Peasants obtained 41 seats as against 26 in the previous Sejm, and the Socialists 64 as against 41; excluding 7 Communists elected, the total strength of the Left had gone up from 100 votes to 130. This swing to the Left did not necessarily mean hostility to Pilsudski at the moment; many of those who voted the Left ticket or list did not feel they were going against him, for it was possible to think of him as inclining more to the Left than to the Right—and it was against the Right they cast their votes; but whatever were the views of the rank and file who supported the Left, it was soon evident that the Left in the Sejm was not in favour of Pilsudski. There was no

change in the number of deputies returned by the National Minorities, though there were some changes in their designation. The Jewish representation fell from 35 to 13, whereas the Ukrainian went up from 21 to 43, the increase in the latter being explained by the fact that the elections of 1922 were boycotted by a considerable part of the Ukrainian population. The large Ukrainian participation in the 1928 elections appeared to indicate a better understanding between the Poles and the Ukrainians. The German representation increased from 17 to 19, and the White Russian declined from 7 to 6.

NO MAJORITY FOR PILSUDSKI

For the Sejm the result was that while the Government Block constituted much the largest single group, it had nothing like an absolute majority. The result of the elections for the Senate, held on March 11, 1928, was better, as it obtained 49 seats out of a possible 111; the Right and Centre tumbled from 64 to 16; on the other hand the Left, as in the Sejm, had risen—20 as against 14. The National Minorities were one less at 24. Revision later made some slight alterations in the figures; substantially they were correct. For the Sejm approximately 15 million men and women were on the roll, and of these $11\frac{3}{4}$ millions voted, or about 78 per cent. Upwards of 300,000 votes were cancelled for one reason or another; the exact number of those who voted was 11,408,218. Thirty-four political parties and groups had each a ticket or list, and thus the public had thirty-four lists of candidates to select from for their suffrages. The Government Block got 2,399,032 votes, and the Socialists, who came next, had 1,481,279; the National Democrats obtained 925,744, and their allies, the united Witos Populist-Christian Democrat Block, 770,891. The figures for the Senate, if less interesting because of its secondary position, were equally instructive respecting the change that had come over Polish politics.

At a meeting after the general election Pilsudski conferred with the leaders of the Government Block and told them that

he had always been a partisan of a Constitutional régime; in his view the Parliament ranged itself alongside the President of the Republic and the Government as an indispensable institution. He stated that he would try—for the third time—to make possible the collaboration of the Government and the Sejm, and he hoped that the considerable number of deputies supporting the Government would facilitate his efforts and lead to success. The Sejm, he continued, could contribute to this happy result by reforming its methods of work. He outlined a programme for the Sejm; it dealt with various questions of immediate practical interest and with Constitutional Reform, the chief things needed, he maintained, being the reinforcement of the Presidential power, the modification of procedure in the Sejm in order to bring about a more efficacious collaboration between it and the Government, and the establishment of the right of the Government to participate in the formulation of the Order of the Day for the Sejm.

SEYM ELECTS ANTI-PILSUDSKI SPEAKER

Sejm and Senate held their opening sitting on March 27, 1928, and Pilsudski, as Prime Minister, read to each of them the Message of President Moscicki. In the Sejm the Communist deputies tried to shout down the Marshal as he was reading, but they were promptly expelled from the Chamber by police, under the direction of Skladkowski, Minister of the Interior. After recalling the difficulties which had been surmounted in the course of the first and second Sejms, the Presidential Message referred with satisfaction to the new Sejm and its prospect of fruitful legislative work in an atmosphere of calm. The chief business of the Sejm, it was suggested, should be concerned with clearing away the defects, which were generally recognized, in the Constitution, and with the solution of the great problem of the harmonious collaboration of the Organs of the State.

One of the first things the Sejm had to do was to elect its Marshal or Speaker—a position, according to the Constitution,

next in importance to that of the President of the Republic. Bartel, who, as Vice-Premier in the Government, had performed most of the routine work which would otherwise have fallen on Pilsudski, was the candidate put forward by the Marshal. But Bartel had lost much of the popularity he had formerly enjoyed with the leaders of parties; for a year he had not been on speaking terms with Rataj, the retiring Speaker; the Sejm regarded him besides as too devoted to Pilsudski and unlikely therefore to stand up to him for its rights. The other candidate for the post was Daszynski, and on a second ballot he was elected by 206 votes to 142 for Bartel—not the best of auguries for the co-operation of Government and Sejm. In the Senate Szymanski, a member of the Government Block, was elected its Speaker by an absolute majority over the other candidates, who included Glabinski, one of the leaders of the Right. The Sejm suspended the "immunity" of the Communist deputies, who were arrested, and in any case were wanted by the police on a criminal charge.

BUDGET SHOWS PROGRESS OF POLAND

Budget proposals were placed immediately before the Sejm; they covered the monthly Budgets for April, May and June, and the full Budget for the fiscal year, April 1, 1928, to March 31, 1929. The revenue and expenditure for the previous year had respectively amounted to 2,767 million zlotys and 2,553 million zlotys, there thus being a surplus for the year of 214 millions, which would have been larger but for the fact that in March the Government authorized the transfer of 51 million zlotys to increase the capital of the State Land Bank. Of the realized surplus 88 millions were devoted to various public works, 75 millions were invested in standard securities, and the remainder was held as a current reserve. The receipts exceeded the original Budget estimates as submitted to the Sejm by 39 per cent., a result obtained without increasing tax rates or creating new sources of revenue. The expenditure also exceeded the original estimates by about 28 per cent.,

the increase being held to be justified by the needs of the country; part of it went to augment the pay of Government officials by special bonuses amounting to upwards of 70 million zlotys; another part was spent on permanent improvements that were urgently required. The increase in the capital of the State Land Bank was in consonance with the policy of promoting agriculture, especially the interests of the poorer peasants with their small farms. In nothing was the growth of the country more exhibited than in the railways, which, besides turning over to the Treasury a larger amount than had been estimated in the Budget, accumulated a surplus of 175 million zlotys. There had been some further railway construction, and work had gone on continuously and on a large scale in the building up of Gdynia, both as port and town. The Budget for the fiscal year 1928-29 estimated the revenue at 2,655 million zlotys and the expenditure at 2,528 millions.

KÖNIGSBERG CONFERENCE

While the Sejm was examining—by law it had five months in which to do this—the Budget, Poland was in the full stream of international affairs; those which concerned her most in 1928 were associated with Lithuania, the League of Nations and Germany. The prospect of an early conference between Poland and Lithuania after the December, 1927, meeting of the Council of the League was not realized, and it was not till March 30, 1928, and only after long negotiations, that a conference was opened at Königsberg, with Zaleski and Valdemaras as the heads of the respective Polish and Lithuanian delegations. Commissions, to meet elsewhere in May, were appointed to deal with the questions of security, indemnities, and traffic, but they made little or no progress. On May 18, 1928, Zaleski, in an exposition of Polish foreign policy given to the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Sejm, said that though the "state of war" proclaimed unilaterally by Lithuania had been abrogated, the task of obtaining normal relations with that State was extremely difficult, as it had

rejected the conventions for non-aggression and arbitration Poland had proposed, and was persistently raising the question of Vilna, though it had been definitely settled by the Ambassadors' Conference.

In his speech the Minister referred to the alliances with France and with Rumania, and emphasized their value. He touched on a visit he had recently paid to Rome which had been the subject of some "fantastic" comment, an allusion to certain statements in portions of the Press to the effect that he was initiating a policy of collaboration with Mussolini against the Little Entente—statements, he said, that had no foundation; "on the contrary," he declared, "I was able to convince myself at Rome that Poland can count on Italy in her efforts for the maintenance of international peace." He concluded with the observation that Poland's relations with Soviet Russia were "normal and correct," that negotiations for a treaty of non-aggression with it were proceeding, and that favourable developments had taken place respecting business matters which might lead to a commercial treaty. Earlier in his remarks he had noted the decision of The Hague Court against Germany and in favour of Poland regarding the School question in Upper Silesia.

On May 26, 1928, Smetona, President of Lithuania, promulgated a New Constitution for that State by decree, and its Fifth Article designated Vilna as the capital of Lithuania. A few days later Zaleski addressed to Valdemaras a Note in protest, and sent a copy of it to the League of Nations. The subject came up before the Council, which had begun its fiftieth session on June 4, and which devoted the morning of June 6 to the relations between Poland and Lithuania, both Zaleski and Valdemaras being present. Beelaerts van Blokland, as *rappporteur*, having made his report, Chamberlain said that Lithuania, as a weak, independent nation, like other small nations, had the sympathy of the Council, but Lithuania would not retain that sympathy if she committed provocative acts such as no Great Power would ever dare to commit against another nation. Speaking to Valdemaras, Chamberlain continued: "You have all our sympathy, but if you wish to keep

it, proceed with the negotiations with Poland so that when the Council next meets, three months hence, it will be in a position to appreciate the great good will you have shown."

Both the French and German representatives concurred, and the Council, on the motion of Chamberlain and despite opposition from Valdemaras, passed a resolution in the sense of Chamberlain's remarks and directing the *rapporteur* to submit a fresh report to the Council at its September meeting. Towards the end of June negotiations between Poland and Lithuania were resumed simultaneously in Warsaw and Kovno, the chief features being the claim of Lithuania for about two millions sterling for damage suffered in the Polish occupation of Vilna, and the counter-claim by Poland of approximately an equal sum for damage caused by Lithuania's breaches of neutrality during the Polish-Soviet War, 1920, and by Lithuanian sharpshooters and irregulars. Events in Poland threw these negotiations into the shade.

FOURTH BARTEL CABINET

Scarcely had the Parliament passed part of the 1928-29 Budget when all Poland was agitated by the announcement that Pilsudski had resigned the Premiership on June 27, that President Moscicki had accepted the Marshal's resignation, and that a new Government had been constituted with Bartel as Prime Minister. With the exceptions of two Ministers, the Bartel Government was identical with that of Pilsudski—who retained the Ministry of War; in reality, of course, the new Cabinet was but an expression of the unchanged Pilsudski régime. Kühn and Switalski, the new men, were respectively Minister of Communications and Minister of Education. Pilsudski had been Prime Minister for a year and nine months, and he explained why he resigned in a somewhat sensational interview in the *Głos Prawdy* (The Voice of Truth), a Warsaw paper, under the title, "Why I ceased to head the Government." It was his first public pronouncement on internal affairs since the *coup d'état*, and it was of considerable length, an "abridged

and paraphrased version of it," dispatched by its Warsaw correspondent to *The Times* on July 1, and published next day, occupying nearly a column in small type. Pilsudski said he had not resigned because of ill-health; he was well; his past efforts had no doubt strained his constitution—and it might be strained again. He might have taken a holiday and remained Prime Minister, but he would not do that.

WHY PILSUDSKI RESIGNED THE PREMIERSHIP

He had resigned because the functions of both the President of the Republic and of the Prime Minister were badly defined in the Constitution, and in practice were intolerable to a man of his temperament. Further, the Parliament employed such insane methods in its work that he was no longer able to stand hearing or seeing it.

In order to avoid misunderstandings (he said) I wish to declare that I personally as Dictator called Parliament together and co-operated with it constitutionally, even though I could have crushed the whole lot under my thumb like a vile worm. When the third Sejm began its work, and I saw no possibility as Prime Minister of tolerating its methods, I faced the alternative of introducing new laws or resigning. I chose the second way.

Pilsudski's programme in 1928 of collaboration with the Sejm had broken down. He declared that he might have remained Prime Minister but for the fact that the man holding that post had to have relations with the Sejm, which he stigmatized as "a sterile, jabbering, howling thing that engendered such boredom as made the very flies die of sheer disgust." The Sejm was like "a locomotive drawing a pin." The deputies behaved as if they were in a common taproom. He continued:

All the time I was Prime Minister I was more Constitutional than the Sejm, and no one can say that I have been wanting in democratic convictions. I would that our deputies would not identify their methods of work with democracy. They do democracy no honour. When the third Sejm started work, and as Prime Minister I saw the bad old habits renewing their triumphs, I decided that once more I had to choose between abandoning all collaboration with the Sejm, while placing myself at the disposal of the President to impose new institu-

tions on Poland, or I had to resign the Premiership. I resigned, and advised the President to replace me by some personality willing to be head of the Government—for a certain time. I added that in case of a grave crisis I shall put myself at the disposal of the President, and boldly take responsibility for decisions and face not less boldly their consequences.

PILSUDSKI ON VILNA

At the close of the interview Pilsudski intimated that, with the consent of the President and of Bartel, Prime Minister, the general guidance of Poland's foreign policy would remain in his hands "as heretofore." On behalf of the Sejm, Daszynski made a spirited reply to the Marshal's criticisms.

At this time Poland's foreign policy, as for months before and for months to come, was mainly occupied with Lithuania, who remained intransigent because of Vilna. Negotiations went on during July, but with such scant success that on July 25, 1928, England, France and Germany made strong representations to Lithuania respecting the need of her complying with the recommendations of the League of Nations. In August the old Polish legionaries held their annual reunion that year in Vilna, and the Lithuanian papers magnified the meeting into a concentration of a large part of the Polish army in that city—this drew a Note to Poland from Germany. Rumour said that 40,000 veterans would assemble in Vilna. Lithuania sent a complaint to the League. Pilsudski was present at the reunion, and delivered a speech which he prefaced with the remark that Vilna would be his theme, but that he would avoid saying a word hurtful to peace or that would cause bitter feeling. Throughout an eloquent and moving address he never even alluded to the conflict with Lithuania. The next step of Valdemaras was to propose a fresh conference at Königsberg, but when Zaleski replied that it would be more convenient for him if the conference was held at Geneva a little before the Assembly of the League in September, the Lithuanian statesman demurred and finally said that it could not take place till after the Assembly.

While these exchanges were proceeding, Zaleski went to

Paris, where he signed on August 27, 1928, as the representative of Poland, the Briand-Kellogg Pact, a multilateral treaty popularly said to "outlaw war," the other signatories representing the Great Powers (including the United States, but not Soviet Russia), Belgium, and Czechoslovakia. Three days later the Council of the League began its fifty-first session, Zaleski being present, and the differences between Poland and Lithuania were discussed on September 6 and 8. Beelaerts van Blokland reported that the only progress achieved since the subject was last before the Council was that a provisional arrangement had been made granting facilities to people whose properties were cut across or separated by the frontier. On September 8 the Council unanimously adopted a resolution in which it was stated that as guardian of the general interest it could not remain indifferent, and should the negotiations between Poland and Lithuania have no appreciable success, it would fail in its duty in permitting this abnormal state of things to continue, particularly as it affected third parties; if it did persist, the Council would refer the dispute to experts who would make searching inquiries "on the spot" and report. A conference between Poland and Lithuania was arranged to take place in November at Königsberg; it sat from November 6 to 9, and ended in failure.

One of the questions discussed at Geneva in September was the evacuation of the Rhineland by the Allies, about which public opinion in Poland was rather reserved, if not unfavourable. In this matter, however, the Polish Government agreed with the action of France. During September negotiations were resumed between Poland and Germany for a commercial treaty, but were almost immediately clouded by a speech of President Hindenburg, while on an official tour of German Silesia, denouncing the attribution of Upper Silesia to Poland and demanding its restitution. The German Press echoed the President's words and attacked Poland. The natural result was the suspension, once more, of the negotiations, though ostensibly it came about from Germany advancing claims which Poland could not recognize.

POLAND'S IMPROVED ECONOMIC SITUATION

On October 31, 1928, the Polish Parliament commenced a new session. Since its last meeting there had been much discussion among the party leaders, in the papers, and in Poland generally of proposals looking to reform of the Constitution. Pilsudski had spent six weeks in Rumania to re-establish his health and recruit his energies; before leaving that country he paid an official visit to Bucarest where he had an enthusiastic reception, and spoke of the "bonds of cordial friendship which had always united Poland and Rumania and would continue to unite them for the benefit of civilization and the pacification of Europe." He returned to Poland early in October. In the Sejm, Czechowicz, Finance Minister, presented the Budget for the fiscal year 1929-30, and commented on the financial and economic situation of the country. The estimates showed a surplus. The improvement in the economic position was proved by the fact that the number of the unemployed had fallen more than fifty per cent. since the beginning of the year—80,000 on October 1 as against 165,000 on January 1, 1928—though, on the other hand, the trade balance was unfavourable, and caution was necessary; the Government was preoccupied with the increase of exports; the rise in imports corresponded with the needs of the nation; foreign capital was required for development purposes. The Government, he said, would intervene only where its action was indispensable, and it encouraged private initiative. The Sejm set about the examination of the Budget in its usual way.

DECENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

On November 11, 1928, all Poland united in celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Liberation, and with good reason. The country had experienced two great dangers and had emerged triumphantly from both: the war with Soviet Russia and inflation. An immense work had been achieved in every field of activity—administrative, legislative, military, social,

agricultural and industrial. The Poland that had been despoiled and all but destroyed during the World War and the war with the Soviet had been renewed, reconditioned, rebuilt. The population had increased to upwards of thirty millions, and had entirely recovered from the depression which was so widespread in the first half of 1926. Confidence had been restored. Danzig and Gdynia gave as good evidences as any of the growth of Polish trade and commerce; the total traffic figures for 1928 for the former port were 8,616,000 tons as against 6,300,000 for 1926, and for the latter, on which construction was still proceeding, 1,966,000 tons as against 414,000 tons.

Poland had the beginnings of a navy and a naval basin at Gdynia for her warships; she had something more than the beginnings of a mercantile marine of her own at both Danzig and Gdynia; the *Zegluga Polska* (Polish Shipping Company), a State enterprise, with headquarters at Gdynia, had acquired in 1927 a fleet of merchant ships trading into the Baltic and elsewhere, and had organized, as a subsidiary, the British-Polish Shipping Company, with London and Hull as its British ports. Gdynia was expanding into a town of 25,000 inhabitants, and gave promise of becoming a flourishing city, with a large population; in 1918 it had been a small fishing village of 200 souls. Agriculture was still the mainstay of Poland—and had its inevitable risks from the weather and the fluctuations of markets. Since 1925, with its bountiful harvest, the crops had been good, but prices were tending towards lower levels in 1928; the fall, however, was very gradual, and did not then cause serious apprehensions for the future. The Poles had every right to congratulate themselves on the wonderful advance their country had made in those ten years.

LUGANO COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE

Poland's foreign policy came much to the front in the December, 1928, meeting of the Council of the League, held at Lugano; Zaleski represented Poland. On December 12 the Council

considered the controversy between Poland and Lithuania, the latter having as her advocate Valdemaras again. The Lithuanian Minister made a long, discursive speech, which covered a great deal of ancient and other history, and at the same time succeeded in "emptying the house," though it filled up once more to hear Zaleski's reply. Two days afterwards Quinones de Leon, the new *rapporteur*, read a report on the subject, and submitted two resolutions which were agreed to unanimously; the first reaffirmed the end of the "state of war," with Poland's recognition of Lithuanian independence and territorial integrity, and the second referred to the Communications and Transit Commission of the League the problem of removing the obstacles to free traffic between the two States.

On December 15, the last day of the session, a sensational but singularly illuminating scene developed just before its close, the occasion being furnished by a discussion on the rights of the German Minorities in Polish Upper Silesia. The Council had received a considerable number of petitions from a German organization in Polish Upper Silesia called the *Volksbund*, a body enjoying the support of the German Government; Adatchi, the Japanese representative, read a report on them, the reading taking up two hours. Commenting on these petitions Zaleski pointed out that in the great majority of cases they were either destitute of foundation or of very slight importance. On the other hand, the *Volksbund* too often neglected to follow the procedure instituted by the Geneva Convention (page 174):

In these conditions (said the Polish Minister) it is difficult to escape the impression that, by the numerous claims brought before the League, the petitioners aimed less at satisfying the demands of the German Minority than in trying to convince the opinion of the world that the rights of that minority are disregarded and the Geneva Convention violated.

Zaleski quoted figures and facts to show that Poland had fulfilled all her undertakings respecting the German Minority in Polish Upper Silesia, and that, in spite of the economic

war started by Germany in 1925, the economic position in that area was satisfactory. These truths clearly indicated that the struggles of the nationalities in the district would not continue if the *Volksbund* abandoned its agitation against the status which existed there—an agitation that created unrest and might lead to subversive action. Some of the members of the organization had been guilty of treason, and he instanced Ulitz, its leader, a deputy in the Silesian Sejm, and therefore “immune.” Zaleski concluded by declaring that the *Volksbund* was directed towards sapping the authority of the Polish Government in Polish Upper Silesia, and was a real danger to peace; such a state of things could not but be injurious to the authority of the League.

At this point Stresemann, the German representative, who had been listening with growing irritation to Zaleski, pounded on the table with his fist, and cried out that such language was intolerable. In a subsequent speech Stresemann said that love of country and high treason were often closely related—a statement which, applied to Polish Upper Silesia, was, at any rate, highly informative regarding the German point of view. Stresemann declared that he would bring the whole question of the Minorities before the Council at its next meeting—in May. It fell to Briand, as President of the Council, to calm the storm by observing that the views expressed had gone beyond the scope of the discussion, though he maintained that the League had not the slightest intention of abandoning the sacred cause of the Minorities.

STRESEMANN'S “GAFFE”

This encounter between the representatives of Poland and Germany excited wide attention. German comment naturally supported Stresemann and praised him for his “stout bearing.” In France his “Bismarckian gesture” was generally deplored, but was noted as a characteristic specimen of German methods. In England not much was said about it; *The Times* in a leading article delicately hinted that Stresemann's health, which

unfortunately had not been completely restored, might have something to do with the affair; this was rather the view taken of it in Warsaw, though there were some references to the familiar use of the German fist as an argument.

En route for Warsaw Zaleski made a statement to the Press in Vienna, the gist of which was that his straight-speaking about the activities of the *Volksbund* would in the upshot serve to bring about better relations with Germany by removing one of the main obstacles to an understanding, namely, revisionist propaganda. On January 15, 1929, Zaleski delivered a speech before the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Sejm in which he said that intensive propaganda for revision of the Eastern frontiers was being conducted in Germany, not exclusively by private organizations, though such activities were contrary to the spirit of the League, and could not but make a *rapprochement* between Poland and Germany, and the general stabilization of European relations, most difficult. Public opinion in Germany was not well-informed, and it seemed to be forgotten that in Germany there was a Polish Minority quite as large as was the German Minority in Poland; the fate of the latter was much more favourable than that of the former, as was shown by the respective number of schools.

LITVINOFF PROTOCOL

Turning to Poland's relations with Soviet Russia, Zaleski referred to a proposal made by Litvinoff, later generally known as the Litvinoff Protocol, for the coming into force immediately of the Pact for the Renunciation of War as between the two countries. A similar proposal had been made to Lithuania. Poland had intimated to the Soviet that she was surprised that the proposal had not been made to Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Rumania, all States bordering Russia, whereas Lithuania had not a common frontier with Russia. In this matter Poland desired to act with the friendly Baltic States and with her ally Rumania. Litvinoff replied that Rumania would be invited to sign, and that negotiations were proceeding with the Baltic

States; this negated the idea that the Soviet's intention had been to separate Poland and Rumania. On February 7, 1929, the Sejm unanimously ratified the Briand-Kellogg Pact.

On this occasion Zaleski said that Poland accepted the Litvinoff Protocol (signed on February 9, 1929, at Moscow) as she wished to demonstrate thereby that she supported every pacific action, and was glad to give a "fresh proof that the accusation levelled at her of harbouring aggressive aims against any neighbouring State whatsoever was unfounded." But in this policy of peace all Polish parties were one; they found no fault with Zaleski—on the contrary, when the Budget Estimates for the Foreign Ministry were being examined by the Sejm, Radziwill, the head of the Foreign Affairs Commission, declared in the name of all the Polish parties and groups that they renounced any discussion of them as Parliament approved the Foreign Minister's policy unreservedly. A more striking tribute to the soundness of the foreign policy, not only of Zaleski, but of the Pilsudski régime, could scarcely have been given.

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Unanimity or anything like it was absent from the internal politics of Poland. On February 6, 1929, the Government Block put before the Sejm the draft of a new Constitution, the chief authors of which were John Pilsudski, a brother of the Marshal, and Makowski, a former Minister of Justice, and which aimed at instituting a Presidential form of Government rather like that of the United States. The nation was declared to be the source of power, and the President to be the highest representative of that power. Instead of being chosen by the two Houses of Parliament sitting together as the National Assembly, the President was to be elected by a plebiscite of the whole people, as in Germany, the choice being between two candidates, one nominated by the Parliament, and the other by the retiring President. The post was to be held for seven years. The President was to have the right to open and dissolve the Parliament, to initiate legislation, and to veto Acts passed

by it; to issue decrees between sessions and during the elections. The Government was to be responsible to the President alone, though it was open to the Parliament, by an absolute majority, to compel its resignation.

Before the Sejm began a discussion of the proposed measure an event happened which was a sequel to the statement made by Zaleski in the December Council of the League respecting the *Volsbund* agitation in Polish Upper Silesia: this was the arrest of Ulitz, the leader of the organization, on February 13, on the dissolution of the Silesian Sejm, of which his membership had given him "immunity" till that date. The charge was that he had falsified documents to facilitate the flight abroad of conscripts. Concerning this arrest Zaleski said Ulitz would receive from the Polish judicial authorities the same treatment as would any Pole similarly accused. Poland would act strictly in accordance with the law. Recalling the question of the optants, Zaleski said that the Polish Government in that case had sought to conciliate Germany by renouncing its right of expulsion; it was hoped that this action would cause an improvement in Polish-German relations, but it had not done so. The present case was on a different footing, as it was in the hands of the *juge d'instruction*, and the Government could not intervene, for that would be to interfere with legal proceedings. As was to be expected, German comment on the arrest was bitter.

DRAFT OF NEW CONSTITUTION

In the Sejm a general discussion of the draft of the new Constitution commenced on February 22, 1929, its chief advocate being Slawek, the head of the Government Block. He said that Poland needed a strong Government, that in the interests of the State the Poles must have their liberties restricted, and that all those who sincerely loved their country must support the draft. It was the well-known Pilsudski line of argument. The National Democrats strongly opposed the draft, maintained the era of absolutism was past, declared the draft did nothing to improve the work of the Parliament, and that it would reduce

the Sejm to impotence; it was not in that way that the citizens of Poland would be educated politically. A Socialist deputy, addressing Slawek and his friends, said that their ideas were separated by an impassable gulf from those of the party to which he belonged, and he warned them to beware. By this time it had become apparent that the Government Block was not unanimous for the draft. Two parties had developed; one, led by Slawek, was called the Colonels' Party, and had 111 votes in the Sejm; the other had Bartel at its head, and in character was more moderate than the other, as it did not wish to make a complete break with the Sejm. In short, the first was more Pilsudskist than the second. It was stated indeed that the "Colonels" had tried to drive Bartel out of the Government, but had been checked by the Marshal himself, who did not desire a change in the Cabinet at that time. What was also apparent was that there was not the slightest chance of the Sejm's adopting the draft—unless it was substantially changed; the great majority of the deputies were absolutely opposed to it as it stood.

IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH DANZIG

One happy event broke the tension for a moment or two. On February 27, 1929, the Free City of Danzig actually gave a warm welcome to an official visit of Bartel, as head of the Polish Government. As already recorded, a distinct betterment in the relations of the Free City and Poland had come about some time previously, the cause being the defeat of the Danzig Nationalists by the Danzig Socialists in the elections, and this had prepared the way for Bartel. At a banquet in the City Hall Sahn spoke of the "mutual drawing together of Poland and Danzig," and hoped that it would "soon reach complete fulfilment." Bartel in response said that the "close union of the economic interests of Poland and Danzig was not only the result of treaties, but also of geographical conditions, and found expression in Poland's policy of understanding with Danzig." He added: "In this policy of close economic co-operation with Danzig, the Polish Government also includes the firm desire to safeguard

the cultural interests of the Free City and its particular national character." A satisfactory result of the understanding between Poland and Danzig was the disappearance of questions bearing on their relations from the proceedings of the League of Nations for a considerable time.

NATIONAL MINORITIES AND THE LEAGUE

At the March, 1929, meeting of the Council of the League the question of the National Minorities was discussed in a much calmer manner than it had been at the previous meeting. Dandurand, the Canadian representative, presented a proposal for dealing with their petitions, and was supported by Stresemann in a vigorous speech, in which he asked for the enlargement of the Council's "Committee of Three," whose function was the examination of such petitions; and he suggested the institution of a Permanent Minorities' Commission. Zaleski thought the Council should first inquire whether these proposals imposed new obligations or whether they came naturally out of the treaties respecting Minorities, and he proposed that three members of the Council should undertake this investigation. In the course of the debate which followed, Chamberlain justified the past action of the committees, but agreed that procedure could be improved; he made a point of stating with regard to the general question that while the protection of National Minorities was a sacred duty, this protection implied an obligation on the part of the Minorities to be faithful and loyal to the State in which they existed; he concluded by supporting Zaleski's proposal.

Briand deprecated the creation of a polemical spirit in the Minorities; it could not contribute to the consolidation of peace among the nations; in his view a Minority was a little family, as it were, within a large family, and while the language, culture, religion and traditions of the former should be safeguarded, that safeguarding should be such as not to weaken the latter but to assure harmony between them. In the end a committee consisting of the British, Japanese and Spanish representatives

was appointed to make a thorough study of the Council's procedure—to report to the June meeting. On March 9 the Council discussed a report presented by Adatchi on the complaints sent in by the Polish Minority in German Upper Silesia and concerned chiefly with defects of the German régime, such as the lack of schools for Polish children. Adatchi also reported on the protests made by the German Minority in Polish Upper Silesia regarding the arrest of Ulitz. On the first point Adatchi said the German Government had made reassuring statements, and touching the second the Polish Government had declared that the trial of Ulitz would be expedited. Ulitz was tried in July and found guilty; he was sentenced to five months' imprisonment, but the sentence was suspended during a probationary period of two years, and, on appeal, was quashed.

SEYM IMPEACHES CZECHOWICZ

Meanwhile the conflict between Pilsudski and the Parliament had become more acute. Towards the close of February the Marshal appeared before the Military Affairs Commission of the Senate to ask that the credits for the army which had been reduced by the Sejm in its debates on the Budget should be restored to the full amount the Ministry of War requested. He explained that he had brought this matter before the Senate and not the Sejm, because the latter muddled everything. But the Senate declined to give the increase by 48 votes to 46 on March 11; the amount in question was two million zlotys; next day the Federation of the Defenders of the Fatherland, whose head was General Gorecki, appealed to the public to raise this sum, and opened a subscription list; within six months one million was handed to Pilsudski. A few days after the Senate's rebuff of the Marshal a fresh stage in the conflict was reached by the Sejm's impeachment of Czechowicz, the Finance Minister, for expending a sum of about 560 million zlotys in excess of the amount voted in the 1927-28 Budget. Czechowicz had resigned on March 7 in order to have greater freedom to

reply to the accusation brought against him, and it was not till March 20 that the Sejm decided on his impeachment by 240 votes to 126.

Shortly before—on the same day—the Sejm passed the Budget for the fiscal year 1929-30, which had been drawn up by Czechowicz, the estimates being 2,954 million zlotys for revenue and 2,787 millions for expenditure; these estimates were higher than those in the 1928-29 Budget, but the figures were lower than those of the actual revenue and expenditure for the year, namely, 3,008 millions and 2,808 millions. Thanks to the greater prosperity of Poland all sources of revenue had yielded more than had been anticipated; taxation brought in 1,737 millions as against 1,495 millions for 1927-28; the monopolies produced 93 millions more than in the previous year. Of the expenditure a large amount was spent for investment purposes in the shape of public buildings, roads, bridges, waterways, drainage, and so on; for these purposes there was also floated an internal loan of fifty million zlotys; the capital of the State Land Bank was raised from 100 million to 130 million zlotys, and that of the National Economic Bank from 130 million to 150 million zlotys. As a matter of fact, Czechowicz had been a good Finance Minister. He was justified in pointing out to the Sejm that it was the first time in its history that it had taken such an "intransigent attitude towards a Minister who had had the good fortune to put in order Poland's finances to assure Budgetary equilibrium and stabilize the exchange."

Technically Czechowicz had sinned, as supplementary estimates for the 630 million zlotys had not been presented to the Sejm, but there had been no concealment; the Sejm knew quite well that the money had been spent and on what, as, for instance, a part of it had gone to swell from 1,820,000 to 9,983,000 zlotys the expenditure authorized for the Prime Minister's Department—then Pilsudski's. The higher figure had been published in the Statistical Bulletin of the Finance Ministry, but it was known that the great increase in this Department's expenditure took place during the months when the electoral campaign of 1928 was at its height. The Opposition

in the Sejm fixed on this fact, and it was Pilsudski, not Czechowicz, whom it really attacked when impeaching the latter on March 20. It was the Pilsudski régime that was under fire. On the evening of March 20 President Moscicki adjourned the Parliament till after the Easter holidays.

Pilsudski on April 7 published an article in the *Głos Prawdy*, in which he castigated the Sejm severely for its incompetencies and inconsequences, the language used being "strictly unparliamentary throughout," as it was afterwards wittily described; he threatened that he might again become Prime Minister as a means of preventing the State Tribunal from trying Czechowicz. Government papers hailed this outburst as emphasizing "the fact that the Parliament had not fulfilled its proper rôle and had to be taught a lesson by Poland's greatest man." The Opposition Press asked if this was the way to talk to educated men; but Pilsudski wished to reach the masses, and therefore employed a vocabulary "understood of the people." On April 11 Bartel published an article in the *Epoka* in which he maintained that the "last success of the Sejm was a defeat for Polish Parliamentarism," and he stated that Pilsudski had "always worked for the betterment of the methods of the Parliament."

THE SWITALSKI CABINET

The resignation of the Bartel Government was announced on April 13, 1929, and Moscicki requested Switalski, Minister of Instruction in the outgoing Cabinet, to form a new Government, which he did. Switalski belonged to the "Colonels" group, and his Cabinet reflected its ideas. Including Pilsudski, again Minister of War, there were seven of the "legionaries" included in the Government. Zaleski continued as Foreign Minister; Matuszewski replaced Czechowicz at the Finance Ministry temporarily, and said he would follow his policy. The trial of Czechowicz began on June 26 and lasted four days; the Court heard many statements for and against the accused. Pilsudski himself spoke, attacked the Constitution and the Sejm, and declared Czechowicz to be guilty merely of a "ritual

crime," inasmuch as he was called on to answer for acts he had not committed. Daszynski and other deputies gave the Seym's version of the affair. On June 29 the Court decided for Czechowicz, as it considered the charge against him was "premature," the Seym not having exhausted the means at its disposal for a complete study of the matter, which, in the opinion of the Court, was much more political than legal.

Next, the Seym rose for the summer vacations and political calm descended on Poland. It was afterwards disclosed by Pilsudski that on the eve of the Czechowicz trial Daszynski had called on him, and after expressing a pessimistic view of the general situation, had told him that the parties of the Left were now disposed to join the Government Block for the purpose of forming a Government which would have a majority in the Seym. Pilsudski did not encourage Daszynski's scheme; to accept it would have meant going back to the sort of Governments that had been in office before the May Revolution, and would be the end, in fact, of the Pilsudski régime.

During April, May and June, 1929, Poland's foreign policy underwent no change. In the first month a Memorandum on Reparations written by Schacht, the German economist, which was understood to contain scarcely-veiled references to the revision of Germany's eastern frontiers, drew from Zaleski the statement that no Government was disposed to give serious consideration to any revision of the Treaty of Versailles, nor could the fundamental rights of nations be bartered for financial concessions. Towards the end of that month an attack on a Polish opera company, which was playing at Oppeln, in German Upper Silesia, inflamed Polish opinion; but the German authorities promptly apologized and discharged the heads of the local police who had failed to deal with the situation. In May the Italian Legation at Warsaw was raised to the rank of an Embassy by the Italian Government, and the Polish Legation at Rome likewise became an Embassy—a fresh tribute to the strong international position which Poland had acquired. During that month Zaleski paid an official visit to Budapest, where he was cordially greeted by the Hungarian

Government and people. As this visit coincided with a Little Entente Conference then being held at Belgrade, it excited some comment as indicating a possible Polish orientation towards Hungary and away from the Little Entente, but there was no justification for it; it expressed merely the truth that cordial relations existed between Poland and Hungary, and had no bearing on Poland's relations with the Little Entente, as Zaleski reiterated.

POLISH UPPER SILESIA INQUIRY

In the June meeting of the Council of the League, which was held at Madrid, Poland was represented by this Minister; before the public meeting Adatchi announced that Germany and Poland had agreed to give every facility for inquiry respecting elementary schools in Upper Silesia to the League's representatives. With regard to the question of the protection of Minorities, on which the special committee appointed at the previous meeting reported, an agreement was reached on June 13, after four days of intense debate. Stresemann again put forward his proposal, which Zaleski opposed, for a Permanent Minorities Commission; the Council passed a resolution which provided for speedier working and greater publicity on the part of the League's existing organizations, with the publication annually of a report of petitions sent in and of the meetings of the League's committees thereanent. On June 15 Germany and Poland decided to begin direct negotiations, under the direction of Adatchi, respecting the liquidation of German properties in Polish Upper Silesia. For some time feeling between Poland and Germany was less strained, and progress was made in the negotiations for a commercial treaty. Opinion in Poland to some extent continued to be exercised concerning the evacuation of the Rhineland by the Allies; Zaleski's view, however, was that "the evacuation, judged from a completely realist standpoint, did not affect the security of Poland at all." Poland was strong in herself and in her alliances.

POZNAN NATIONAL EXPOSITION

That Poland was strong in herself, that her entire national life was developing steadily and well, particularly under the Pilsudski régime, was manifested to the whole world by the great Polish National Exposition at Poznan, which was opened officially on May 16, 1929, and closed on September 30 following. It was more than an exhibition; it was an important event in the history of the new Poland, for it was at once a record of the achievement of the past ten years, and a guide to what she was likely to achieve in the future. It illustrated her immense resources in agriculture and industry, and her capacity for organizing and exploiting them to the utmost advantage. It demonstrated the growth of her trade and commerce along her railways and through Danzig and Gdynia. It pictured her universities and schools and other features showing the high value she placed on education. The ground actually covered by the Exhibition fell but little short of that occupied by the British Exhibition at Wembley. The number of visitors was four and a half millions, of whom 300,000 came from abroad. As many as twenty official missions from foreign countries went to Poznan and were—perhaps astonished, but certainly convinced by what they saw; many eyes were opened for the first time to the greatness of Poland. And unlike Wembley, the Poznan Exposition did not wind up with a deficit, as not a few Poles had feared; it paid its expenses. But considered as exemplifying a stage in the national development, in which every Pole found a response to patriotic feeling, it was beyond price.

Among those who visited the Poznan Exposition was Madgearu, then Rumanian Minister of Industry and Commerce. Advantage was taken of his presence in Poland to begin negotiations for amplifying the commercial treaty between Poland and Rumania; these led to the signing of a series of conventions on September 4, 1929, regulating the direct transit of merchandise, both ways, between Gdynia and Constantza and Galatz—thus linking up the Baltic and the Black Sea—simpli-

fyng the customs, and adjusting railway rates and other charges. Among those who also went to Poznan was Novak, Czechoslovak Minister of Commerce and Industry; he made a point of visiting Gdynia, as a possible outlet for his country's manufactures. How entirely changed for the better were the relations between Czechoslovakia and Poland was evident from the fact that some 50,000 Czechoslovaks were reported to have gone to Poznan to see the Exposition. During September the Ministers of Commerce of Finland, Estonia and Latvia also visited Poznan—which occasioned talk in Germany of a fresh Polish effort to create a "Baltic Block," especially having regard to the facts that Strandman, the Estonian Head of the State, was well disposed towards Poland, and that Finland was showing herself less "Scandinavian" and more "Baltic" than before. A group of Berlin journalists who made a tour of Poland at this time gave utterance to a profound truth when they said in a farewell message to their Polish confrères: "The necessary *rapprochement* between Poland and Germany depends on their better knowledge of each other." One of the most remarkable and at the same time most pleasant features of the Exposition was the great welcome given by the Polish authorities to the visit in September of the Bürgermeister and Council of Breslau, the capital of German Silesia. The visit was returned by the Mayor and Council of Poznan in October, after the Exhibition had closed. Both visits were distinguished by the friendly feeling shown to each other by Germans and Poles. Of course, France sent an impressive delegation to Poznan, and what it saw there could not but strengthen the bonds between the two countries. In every way indeed the Poznan Exposition was of great significance to Poland. Though it had nothing to do with the Exposition, the announcement in September that the British Legation in Warsaw and the Polish Legation in London were to be raised to the rank of Embassies, and an intimation by President Hoover that Washington would follow this example—in line with France, Italy and the Vatican—provided another source of legitimate pride and satisfaction to the Polish State and people, who saw in it an

additional recognition of the amazing advance made since the Liberation.

But there was no abatement of the conflict between the Pilsudski régime and the Parliament. Early in September a proposal by Switalski that a meeting should take place of the chiefs of the parties and groups with the Government in order to give a purely objective character to the approaching debates on the Budget for 1930-31, was rejected by the National Democrats and the Centre and Left parties; the National Minorities stood aloof. On September 21 Matuszewski, Acting Minister of Finance, published in the papers a statement respecting the financial situation, and underlined the truth that great economies were and would be necessary for some time. He said that the Budget for 1930-31 would in no case exceed that for the previous year; a fortnight later the Government Estimates gave 2,943 million zlotys for revenue and 2,934 millions for expenditure. A change had come over the economic situation, not through any fault on the part of Poland, but because of world conditions, as manifested chiefly in the fall in the prices of wheat, rye and other cereals.

CHECK TO POLAND'S PROSPERITY

Perhaps after a run of prosperity lasting for three years some recession was to be expected in Poland. Yet the year 1929 was marked by an excellent harvest not only in cereals, but in potatoes, sugar beets and fodder crops; the total yield was considerably larger than the average for the previous five years. Agricultural production, then, was high, and would have told in favour of Poland if the grain markets of the world had continued to be affected by the usual, rather precarious balance between production and consumption. But world production was fast outrunning consumption, the balance dipped ever more heavily against the producer, and, as a predominantly agricultural country, Poland was one of the first lands to feel the difference in the general situation. In October, 1929, rye was 40 per cent. under the average price for the three previous years, barley was 37 per cent., and wheat 25 per cent. This state

of things was intensified by the lack of capital or, in other words, the shortage of credit. The purchasing power of the peasantry necessarily declined, and this had its inevitable reaction on the whole economic position. On the other hand, the Polish heavy industries—coal, iron, steel and so on—did well during the greater part of 1929; exports of coal amounted to nearly 14 million tons, and foundry production was well maintained for several months. The timber industry, however, was depressed throughout the year by low prices. In the latter half of 1929 the change began to show itself, and it was emphasized as the months passed by, particularly in the textile industry, owing to the peasants' lack of cash; most of the mills in Lodz were running at half-time, with a heavy drop in the numbers of the employed. The figures for the unemployed in all Poland rose from 126,000 on January 1, 1929, to 186,000 by the end of the year.

THE WORLD DEPRESSION

In Poland belief was general that this change for the worse was merely temporary, but it was serious enough to give point to the need of economy on the part of the Government. The bursting of the long-continued "Boom" in the United States could not but aggravate the general world situation, and, as the catastrophe had been precipitated by the fall of prices in the grain markets, was bound to have an unfortunate effect especially on the Polish economic situation. How far it would go could not be foreseen, nor could it be foretold that 1930, with its great crops of cereals, was to be far worse than 1929, with a lamentable deepening of the world depression. At any rate, Pilsudski, the Government, the Government Block and the Parliament occupied themselves mainly with other things.

PRESSURE ON THE SEYM

Slawek, as chief of the Government Block, suggested to the chiefs of the other parties that they should meet to discuss

the question of a new Constitution; besides the Government Block's draft already submitted to the Sejm, there were the draft which had been drawn up by the Socialists and the amendments tabled by the National Democrats. But both the Socialists and the National Democrats declined Slawek's invitation, on the ground that such a meeting took no cognisance of the Sejm's own Constitutional Commission. On September 29 Slawek published a statement that the parties in the Sejm, for purely formal reasons, had refused to collaborate on the question of a new Constitution. But this overture from the Government Block, following on that from Switalski, had emboldened the Opposition; the Socialists clamoured for the resignation of the Government, and openly asserted that the régime had been forced to come to terms with the Parliament. Pilsudski himself had published an article in the papers of the Government Block attacking the other leading parties in the Sejm, and disclosing the fact that Daszynski had offered the collaboration of the Left with the Government because the former had changed its views—it was to test the sincerity of that change that he (Pilsudski) had asked Switalski to communicate with the party chiefs, the result being nil. "It is the deputies," said the Marshal, "who endanger Poland most!" Daszynski replied in an open letter demanding the immediate convocation of the Sejm, and affirming that Pilsudski had shown more than once the "hatred and contempt with which the Sejm inspired him."

ARMED MEN IN SEYM LOBBY

The Sejm should have reopened on the afternoon of October 31, 1929, but did not, owing to a curious incident. Before the time appointed for the opening some fifty officers of the army assembled in the lobby (which was free to everybody) of the Sejm, and loudly cheered Pilsudski when he arrived and joined the other members of the Government there present, except Switalski, who was absent from indisposition. Four o'clock, the hour set for the opening, came, but Daszynski,

having heard of the presence of the officers in the lobby, refused to start the proceedings, which was one of his functions as its Speaker, and ordered the officers to leave the building; this they declined to do, as they wished, it was explained, to salute the Marshal on his retiring from the Sejm. On Daszynski repeating his order, they again refused to obey him, whereupon he sent a letter to President Moscicki with his version of what was going on. After waiting for over an hour for the opening of the Sejm Pilsudski became impatient, went to Daszynski's room, and asked him why he did not open the session. Because, Daszynski replied, officers were making an armed demonstration in the precincts of the Sejm. "Is that your last word?" demanded the Marshal. "Yes," was the answer; "I refuse to open the session under the menace of swords and revolvers."

Pilsudski went at once to the Zamek, the palace of the President, to give him his side of the story, the upshot being that Moscicki wrote to Daszynski that in view of the conflicting statements received respecting the incident, he proposed to postpone the opening of the session. Daszynski next communicated the President's decision to the party chiefs. The Socialists expressed their confidence in Daszynski, and the National Democrats condemned the "irruption of a group of armed officers into the precincts of the Parliament," while the Government Block said that in their opinion a grave attack had been made on the dignity of the officers who had come to salute the Marshal, and that the action of Daszynski, being of a demagogic nature, had for its real object the causing of disquiet throughout the country which the facts of the case in no way justified. The incident, however, did not create a great commotion throughout Poland, but undoubtedly it did not make a good impression abroad in countries where Parliamentaryism was still respected, though even in them it had ceased to be the fetish that it once was. Granted that the appearance of the officers in the lobby of the Sejm was something more than a mere demonstration of their regard for Pilsudski, the truth would seem to be that Daszynski rather lost his head over the business, and would have come better out of it if he had opened the session in the customary

way. The opening of the Sejm was next set for November 5, but on that day Moscicki decreed the adjournment of the Parliament for a month.

POLISH-RUMANIAN AND OTHER RELATIONS

A few days before the verbal duel between Pilsudski and Daszynski in the Sejm, Zaleski paid an official visit to Bucarest, and signed with Mironescu, Rumanian Foreign Minister, a treaty of arbitration and conciliation, its informing idea, as in similar international treaties of the time, being that any differences between Poland and Rumania which failed of adjustment through conciliatory effort would be referred to arbitration. In a sense Zaleski's visit, and the statements he made in the course of it, might be regarded as an answer to the suggestion that his recent visit to Budapest marked a new orientation in Polish foreign policy; but Poland's relations with Rumania, as already recorded, had always been of the most friendly and intimate kind. Both Zaleski and Mironescu in their public utterances emphasized the points that the alliance of their countries was strictly defensive, was not directed against any other Power, and was in truth a factor making for peace and not for war.

Another step in Poland's foreign policy at this time was the signing at Warsaw on November 1, 1929, of an agreement with Germany for the liquidation of various financial questions that had remained over from the World War. Germany renounced all claims, whether Governmental or private, against Poland, and Poland likewise, and in conformity with the recommendations of the Young Plan of Reparations, renounced all claims against Germany; she also consented not to proceed with the liquidation of German properties in Polish territory. Various other matters which had caused friction between the two States were also settled, and the way was cleared, it was thought, for the commercial treaty that had hung fire so long. Another feature of the late autumn of 1929 was the fall of Valdemaras at the instance of President Smetona; at first there was some

hope in Poland, sincerely anxious to be good friends with Lithuania, that the change would lead to better relations with her, but this soon vanished, as the new Lithuanian Government under Tubelis, with Zaunius as Foreign Minister, intimated that there would be no alteration of policy.

A question of the day that agitated some Poles was whether an entente between France and Germany, which was being talked of, would not be unfavourable to Poland, and it was answered by Zaleski, who said that such an entente, if realized, could not fail to make for the general stabilization of peace, and therefore should be regarded by Poland as a good thing, both for herself and all Europe. But Zaleski and his sound policy commended themselves, now as ever, so thoroughly even to the Opposition in the Sejm that foreign policy was not an issue in Polish politics there. What remained the issue was the question of the revision of the Constitution, together with the Pilsudski-Sejm situation. The Sejm met again on December 5, and during the month that preceded its opening the Switalski Government, the Government Block and the Opposition, which consisted of nearly all the other parties and groups, took the opportunity of putting their views before the country. The Socialists were particularly bitter in their attacks on the régime; their paper, the *Robotnik*, declared that Pilsudski had completely changed, was no longer democratic, and had become a reactionary. It was said that at least one reason for their hostility arose from the loss by prominent members of the party of well-paid positions in connexion with the National Health Assurance offices, the Government having replaced them by its own officials. The Peasant Parties declared against the Government, as did most of the National Minority groups. The National Democrats had always opposed Pilsudski and continued to do so. The advocates of the régime said they would never abandon the fight for a strong and stable Government, and that their object was not to gain power, for they already had it, but was the creation of a sane Constitution such as Pilsudski was trying for.

PILSUDSKI'S AIMS

One of the best expositions of the aims of the Marshal was given by Kwiatkowski at Lwow on December 1, 1929; he said:

As regards the task undertaken by Marshal Pilsudski—the realization of the indispensable reform—it is not a question of a fight against national representation, since it was the Marshal himself who called it into being, and who has many times maintained that the Parliament in a free democracy, the outcome of a General Election, constitutes an effective factor in the life of a free State. Marshal Pilsudski has always tried and will continue to try to make the idea triumph that a Constitution for Poland must not be copied from something foreign, but must have its own character in correspondence with the natural conditions of the country. For success the Government must have the necessary power. The control of the Government by the Sejm must not mean its interference with the business of the State. Methods of work must be improved. A strong Government is not a dictatorship nor is it anti-democratic. The Pilsudski party will pursue its work without turning from the path marked out by its Chief—which leads to the organization of the State and not to anarchy, to the equilibrium of powers in a true democracy, to the collaboration of all the factors of the State, within the framework of a logical Constitutional régime, and not to the struggle of all against all.

Daszynski opened the Sejm on the morning of December 5, 1929, with a speech in which he said that, apart from the Budget, the work in hand was the revision of the Constitution, and it ought to be completed as soon as possible. Next Matuszewski, Finance Minister, discussed the Budget, and again indicated that economy was essential. But the Opposition was not greatly concerned at the moment with the financial and economic situation. In the afternoon the Government was attacked first by the Socialist Niedzialkowski, who, in the name of six parties of the Centre and Left—hence known as the *Centrolew*—consisting of the Witos Populists, the National Workers, the Christian Democrats, the Radical Populists, the Peasant Party and the Socialists, moved a vote of non-confidence. Rybarski, a chief of the Right, denounced the Government for not having a definite programme of Constitutional reform. Next, the heads of the National Minorities came out

against the Government. On December 6 Switalski and other members of the Cabinet replied, the burden of their speeches being that the country could not return to the régime in existence before the May Revolution. After a discussion lasting nine hours the motion of non-confidence was passed by 246 votes to 120. Next day the Switalski Government resigned.

FIFTH BARTEL CABINET

President Moscicki publicly intimated that he would begin a series of conferences with prominent men of all parties to consider the situation. He summoned the Speakers of both Houses, the chiefs of parties and groups, and other leaders, including Bartel, though he had resigned his mandate as deputy. On December 17 Moscicki assembled all the political chiefs, and after telling them that he did not intend to ask Switalski to form a new Government, said he had brought them together to know whether the Sejm was ready to undertake the revision of the Constitution or not. Slawek, as leader of the Government Block, declared that hitherto the other parties had not supported the efforts of those who were trying to effect it. The leaders of the Opposition, however, protested their willingness to help. The crisis was not over, but the President's tact and geniality produced a better atmosphere. Perhaps he had persuaded Pilsudski to give the Sejm another chance. At all events on December 21 in agreement with the Marshal, he put the formation of a new Government in the capable hands of Bartel, who was successful; Moscicki accepted the new Cabinet on December 29. Bartel was Prime Minister—for the fifth time in his career. Zaleski remained Foreign Minister and Pilsudski Minister of War. Most of the other Ministers had been members of the preceding Government, but the number belonging to the "Colonels" group was reduced, and this was taken to mean a less forthright policy on the part of Pilsudski. To the Press Bartel said that he placed his trust in the method of collaborating with the Parliament. But there was no real weakening of the régime, incarnate in Pilsudski.

In Poland during 1930 the internal political situation remained the most absorbing subject of interest, but the internal economic situation, influenced, as it was, by the world economic situation, which became worse and worse as the year went on, had also a most important bearing on the national life. In the first case the long-continued conflict between Pilsudski and the Parliament was settled by a general election very decidedly in his favour; but in the second case no solution of the economic crisis could be said to be even in sight for Poland in particular and the world in general. Briand's historic speech at the September, 1929, Assembly of the League had outlined an economic United States of Europe, and opened up an enormous field of debate, but its effect was speculative rather than practical—exploratory, without any profound conviction of ultimate success. When he delivered his address at Geneva the general economic situation was not so bad as it became afterwards; the growing economic pressure in 1930 gave greater substance to his suggestion, and in that order of ideas conduced to the proposal for a tariff truce, and imparted special significance to economic conferences held in Warsaw and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, though these dealt with the agrarian side of the question.

HAGUE CONFERENCES, 1929-1930

From the financial point of view Poland started the year well by receiving certain benefits from the second Hague Conference, which was chiefly concerned with the settlement of "Eastern Reparations," in connexion with the Young Plan, the first Hague Conference, held in August, 1929, having remitted them to experts for investigation and adjustment. The second conference, which sat from January 3 to January 20, 1930, settled reparations and cognate matters affecting principally the Little Entente, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece and Hungary, as well as the Great Allies and Germany, but as an issue of this conference

agreements were signed at The Hague on February 20, 1930, by which Poland was freed from payment of 2.5 milliards of gold marks as indemnity for German State properties in Poznania, Pomerania and Polish Upper Silesia, and from participation in the Debts of Germany and Prussia; in addition Poland was freed from payment of 1.5 milliards of gold crowns as indemnity for Austrian State properties in Galicia or Austrian Silesia; and the Liberation Tax, amounting in her case to 288 million gold francs, was cancelled. The agreements were mostly based on reciprocal renunciation of claims, and were beneficial in promoting the "Liquidation of the Past"; they were of the same character as the agreement signed by Poland and Germany on October 31, 1929.

Poland's relations with Germany during 1930 fluctuated, as was bound to be the case, but they opened auspiciously. As it happened, Zaleski in his turn was President of the Council of the League when it met at Geneva in January, 1930, and in the course of a speech beginning the work of the session he paid a remarkable tribute to Stresemann who had died a short time before. Speaking of the dead statesman as a great German patriot, Zaleski said it was understandable that in the first years of the new Poland differences in their points of view should exist between Poland and Germany; but he had always highly appreciated the courage, perseverance and deep conviction brought to bear by Stresemann, despite these differences, on the general pacification of Europe. Müller, the German Chancellor, sent a telegram to Zaleski thanking him for his speech. In February the Polish-German agreement of October, 1929, came before the Reichsrat, which passed it. On February 11 the Young Plan and the agreement were discussed by the Reichstag, but it was not till March 12, after a great deal of debate, that the plan was passed by 270 votes to 192, and the agreement by 236 to 217—the much smaller majority for the latter being symptomatic of the feeling it evoked. On March 13 President Hindenburg promulgated the Acts referring to the Young Plan, but he postponed signing the Act promulgating the agreement for a week—another significant sign. Still, on

March 17, 1930—at long last—a treaty of commerce was signed at Warsaw between Poland and Germany. The negotiations for it had begun as far back as March, 1925, and had been broken off six times, more from political than economic reasons. In Poland much was hoped from this treaty, but the outcome was disappointing.

FIFTH BARTEL CABINET RESIGNS

Meanwhile there had been a further development in the Polish internal situation. By an adverse vote in the Sejm the Bartel Government was overthrown on March 14, and it resigned next day; the President accepted its resignation on March 17. Bartel's attempt to collaborate with the Sejm, or rather with the Opposition, proved an utter failure. On January 10 he had delivered a long address, in which he strongly appealed to the Parliament for an effort in common; the Government did not desire to impose its views; on the contrary, it wished most sincerely to continue the work of reform in co-operation with every element that might assist it; as for himself, he had faith that there would be this collaboration. He then spoke of the necessity there existed for revising the Constitution, a "necessity recognized by every enlightened person in Poland," but he was careful to state that the Government would not depart from the general principles for which Pilsudski stood; it would pay great attention, however, to the debates on the proposals which were to be put before the Constitutional Commission. He also referred to the need of co-operation respecting the economic situation, with its growing difficulties.

DRAFTS OF NEW CONSTITUTION

Two drafts of a revised Constitution were placed at the outset before the Sejm: one was that of the Government Block, and the other came from the Left. The first draft, which was put forward by the Block and not by the Government itself, was on Pilsudski lines; the second, while reinforcing the powers of the President, nationalized industry and transport, and gave auto-

nomy to portions of the *Kresy*. On February 18 the Centre also submitted its draft, thanks to receiving the necessary backing from a sufficient number of Left deputies; to rank for consideration by the Commission a draft required the backing of 111 deputies, and the Centre borrowed for this purpose the signatures of 61 members of the Peasant and other Left parties. The Centre held that all that was needed was a slight extension of the legislation passed after the May Revolution, but the draft gave the right of a suspensive veto to the President while, on the other hand, restricting his right to issue decrees; it increased the powers of the Senate, and stipulated that a vote of non-confidence in the Sejm had to be passed by a majority of three-fifths to be operative. The Right did not submit a draft, as it failed to get sufficient backing. On March 4 the Commission asked the Government to choose between the drafts; the Cabinet, including Pilsudski, responded by a statement, published on March 7, that the programme of revision should make the President the supreme factor in the life of the State, and with that object change the manner of his election; delimit the respective competences of the Executive and the Legislative; confer the veto on the President and enlarge the scope of his legislative action; determine precisely the powers of the Government; and define Parliamentary immunity.

In some quarters it was thought that this programme, if slightly modified, might be accepted by the Sejm, as the Centre parties of the Opposition were in favour more or less of certain of its features—the Government Block naturally swallowed it whole; but whatever prospect it had was spoiled by the action of the Socialists who tabled a motion of non-confidence in Prystor, the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, on the ground that he had carried out changes in the administration of the National Health Insurance in defiance of the law; it was these reforms which, as already recorded, had driven certain prominent Socialists from lucrative posts in that administration. Most of the other parties approved Prystor's dealing with this matter. Yet the National Democrats supported the Socialist motion, not because they objected to Prystor, but

because they wished to attack another Minister, Czerwinski, who held the portfolio of Public Education and was thought to favour the "single school" system, a principle which they detested but which was dear to the Socialists. A bargain was struck between the Socialists and the National Democrats; but Bartel announced that the Government would consider a vote of non-confidence in Prystor a vote against itself. At the same time Bartel vigorously denounced the Parliament; he said that, completely disillusioned, he no longer believed in the possibility of collaboration between the Government and the Sejm. Two days afterwards Bartel, on the Sejm voting against Prystor, offered the resignation of the Government to President Moscicki. The motion against Czerwinski was not pressed to a vote. Pilsudski advised against submission to the Sejm; he wished Prystor to retain his post—which meant that another Government could not be constituted till April 1, when the ordinary session of the Parliament terminated; if it was constituted earlier the Sejm could and no doubt would have thrown it out.

BUDGET AND THE CRISIS

With this turn of events in the Parliamentary crisis was now associated the Budget for 1930-31. During the session discussions of a noisy and tumultuous character on the Budget had been frequent in the Sejm, and reductions had been made in the amounts assigned in the Estimates to the Ministries of War and Foreign Affairs for secret services. The Sejm passed an amended Budget on February 12. This Budget then went to the Senate, which passed it on March 13, but with the figures improved from the Government standpoint; thus, the amount assigned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was increased by two million zlotys over that voted by the Sejm. The Budget went back to the Sejm, which had to pass it by April 1, the date of the prorogation of the Parliament, otherwise the Budget as passed by the Senate would be legalized, a thing which the Opposition was determined to prevent. Pending the appointment of another Government the Bartel Ministry continued to

function by request of the President, and day after day passed without the emergence of its successor; indeed, it was alleged that Pilsudski was playing for time against the Sejm.

On March 18 the President invited Szymanski, Speaker of the Senate, to form a Cabinet, but Szymanski's efforts, which extended over a week, failed, after repeated consultations with the Government Block and the other parties. The leaders of the Block told Szymanski they did not believe that collaboration with *this* Sejm was possible. Pilsudski himself said that he would not take part in any Cabinet unless it agreed in advance to conditions which in effect deprived the existing Sejm of most of its powers. Informed of these conditions, the Opposition leaders declined to support Szymanski, who on March 26 announced to Moscicki that he had not succeeded. The President next turned to John Pilsudski, the younger brother of the Marshal, and asked him to constitute a Government; the invitation was accepted, but the result was the same as with Szymanski's attempt. The Socialists lost all patience, for April 1 was close at hand, and nothing had been settled about the Budget. On March 29 Daszynski convoked the Sejm in full session, and it passed the Budget in half an hour, with the figures at 3,038 million zlotys and 2,940 million zlotys for revenue and expenditure respectively.

FIRST SLAWEK CABINET

Later in the same day Moscicki requested Slawek to form a Cabinet; Marshal Pilsudski supported Slawek, who quickly got together a Government, which was sworn in during the evening; at the same time the President decreed the closure of the Parliament.

The new Prime Minister proceeded to tell the Government Block that as the majority in the Sejm—the Opposition—had not the welfare of the State at heart, and had no real understanding of the national interests, the logic of events dictated almost necessarily that this Sejm must come to an end, with a general election to follow. It was the duty of the Block, he added, to inform the country in the meantime of the issues at

stake in order that when it was appealed to it should know how to vote. On April 5 the *Centrolew* issued a statement in which it said that as the Sejm was shut public opinion must express itself in some other way; the time for silence was past; for its own part it demanded the abolition of the "dictatorship and a return to the lawful régime," and it expressed the hope that if the Parliament was dissolved, the elections would be "honest." Some three weeks afterwards 150 delegates, representing the National Democrats in all parts of Poland, met in a conference at Warsaw, Dmowski taking part in its deliberations. A lengthy resolution was passed proclaiming the failure of the Government to deal with the economic situation, and demanding the suppression of the Pilsudski régime.

Daszynski, as Speaker of the Sejm, presented, on May 9, 1930, to Moscicki a petition, signed by the requisite number of deputies (one-third of the whole) in accordance with the Constitution, demanding the convocation of the Sejm in extraordinary session. The President complied by summoning the Sejm for May 23, but on that day he decreed its adjournment for thirty days—also in accordance with the Constitution. On that day, too, the *Centrolew* published a strong protest against the adjournment, and accused the Government of aggravating the economic situation by its policy; it declared for the maintenance of the struggle against the "dictatorship" and for the "Constitution." On the same day the National Democrats issued a declaration to a similar effect, though differently worded. On June 23 Daszynski convoked the Sejm, but the President again intervened, and adjourned it for another month. It was clear that the Government had no intention of permitting this Sejm to meet, and the *Centrolew* announced that a great congress would be held at Cracow on June 29 "for the defence of public law and liberty."

CONTINUITY OF POLAND'S FOREIGN POLICY

Notwithstanding the increasing tension of the conflict between the Pilsudski régime and the Opposition in the Sejm, Poland

showed the same admirable continuity in her foreign policy that had been characteristic of her for years. It was a steadfast policy of peace, coupled with the affirmation of the intangibility of her frontiers. Her desire for permanently friendly relations with the Baltic States was demonstrated by the cordial welcome she gave Strandman, Estonian Head of the State, when he visited Warsaw in February, 1930; the Polish Press was unanimous in stressing the fact that their country strongly favoured the independence of these States, and some papers recalled how Pilsudski in 1920 had disinterestedly supported the Latvians against the Soviet. Referring to Strandman's visit, Zaleski said it was the wish of Poland to be surrounded by friendly States, as she herself was one of the indefatigable champions of the *rapprochement* of nations. In an earlier speech he stated that the Polish nation was "profoundly attached to work and peace, menaced no one, and did not dream of attacking anybody." He also spoke with satisfaction of the growing power and authority Poland enjoyed in the world, and instanced her re-election to a second three years' seat on the Council of the League almost unanimously. He touched on the Polish emigration into other lands—three-quarters of a million Poles had gone to work and live in France since the Liberation and were protected by several friendly conventions and arrangements between France and Poland—and hoped it would not lose contact with the mother country.

POLISH-GERMAN TENSION

Great expectations were attached to the signing of the commercial treaty with Germany; it included the most favoured nation clause, and made large concessions to Polish imports; it certainly had the appearance of making for better relations between the two States. But on April 14, 1930, Germany raised her customs tariff to such an extent as to negative the benefits Poland anticipated from the treaty; for example, she was permitted under the treaty to import into Germany two hundred thousand pigs, rising to larger figures, annually, but

the new duty made this concession derisory, as it amounted to a sum which left little or nothing for the Polish producer. In fact, Germany took away with one hand what she had given with the other; comment in Poland was sharp and bitter, as was inevitable. A general election took place in Polish Upper Silesia for the local Parliament; the result gave satisfaction to the Poles, for their candidates polled 396,000 votes against 205,000 for the German candidates; there were 30 Polish members as against 15 German. The Poles could also point with equal satisfaction to the falsification of the predictions made by Germans and others that production in their part of Upper Silesia would fall off substantially after the division of the territory; instead of a decrease an increase was recorded. Naturally this did not please all Germans. Frontier "regrettable incidents" had been rare, but in May and June, 1930, several occurred in which Poles were shot, and aroused Polish resentment. Alluding to these affairs Curtius, German Foreign Minister, denied that they had been systematically provoked, as some foreign (Polish) papers had asserted, and he declared that Germany was determined on a pacific settlement of every kind of conflict between States. The incidents were investigated by mixed commissions; in themselves these affairs were not of great importance, but none the less were significant of the state of tension.

DANZIG'S DEMAND

Of that tension Poland saw another indication in a statement presented in June by the Senate of Danzig to the High Commissioner of the League of Nations in the Free City demanding that Poland should make full use of the port—which, it was alleged, she was not doing, but was giving preferential treatment to her own port, Gdynia. In the Danzig Volkstag Sahm said that Danzig was faced with an economic crisis through the fact that Poland, having succeeded at Versailles in separating Danzig from Germany on the ground that she would employ the port of Danzig, as her only approach to the sea, to its whole capacity, had since made the "fishing village of Gdynia a modern port,

and was diverting Danzig trade to it by a lavish use of Government powers.”

These statements drew from Strasburger, Polish Commissary-General at Danzig, a trenchant and fully documented reply; he stated there was nothing in the Treaty of Versailles preventing Poland from building a port on her own strip of the Baltic littoral, and, further, that thanks to Polish trade and commerce the port of Danzig had made enormous strides, the turnover in 1929 being four times that of 1913; no other port in the world could show such a wonderful advance. As already recorded, relations between Poland and the Free City changed for the better in 1929, but an election in May, 1930, had resulted in putting again in power the extreme Nationalists who were hostile to Poland; hence Sahm's speech and the Senate's action. The truth was that the growth of Gdynia excited the jealousy of Danzig; the Polish Government once more stated that it regarded both ports as essential for Poland. In February, 1930, another contract was concluded with the Franco-Polish syndicate by which the Gdynia building programme was greatly extended, at a further cost of nearly 50 million zlotys; the whole construction was to be completed by April, 1934. The population of Gdynia in 1930 was upwards of 40,000.

Poland's relations with the Soviet, which had been normal for some time, were affected, though not seriously, by the discovery in April of a bomb in the chimney of the Soviet Legation at Warsaw. The Soviet Minister in Warsaw presented two Notes on the subject to the Polish Government, the first pressing for action to terminate a state of things in which it was possible for Soviet representatives to be frequently exposed to "terrorist violence" (*sic*), and the second regretting the "slow action" of the Polish Government in the matter. The culprit, however, had fled the country, but he was extradited, brought to Warsaw, and in April, 1931, sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

Returning Zaleski's visit to Rome in 1928, Grandi, Italian Acting Foreign Minister, arrived in Warsaw in June, 1930, and was received most cordially. At a banquet Zaleski congratulated Italy on her "marvellous development during the last eight

years," and spoke of the friendship existing between her and Poland. Grandi saw Pilsudski, and had a long conversation with him—an exceptional honour. Grandi's visit to Poland was important as indicating continuance of Italian good will.

ECONOMIC SITUATION WORSENS

There was really no change in Polish foreign affairs during the first half of 1930. Where there was change, and not for the better, was in Poland's economic situation, for the reasons already given—world over-production and low prices. Yet her national balance sheet for 1929-30 was not bad, considering the position fairly. Due to business depression the rapid growth of the revenue ceased, but it remained roughly as in the previous year. The expenditure was restricted to an amount slightly above that for 1928-29. For 1929-30 the revenue amounted to 3,030 million zlotys and the expenditure to 2,970 millions, leaving a surplus of 60 millions. Taxation brought in 1,736 millions, or about the same as in the preceding year. The source of revenue most affected by adverse business conditions was the customs duties; imports of manufactured or semi-manufactured goods decreased in quantity and quality as the purchasing power of the population declined. The monopolies, producing about one-quarter of the revenue of the State, contributed nearly as much as in 1928-29. Despite low prices in the timber industry the State forests yielded about as much as the Budget had estimated; posts and telegraphs did better. The State railways, on the other hand, which had been counted on to give about 70 million zlotys to the Treasury, were unable to turn over anything to the Government, and thus indicated the depressed condition of trade generally.

The authorized expenditure, which supplementary credits increased to 3,059 million zlotys, was not carried out in full; in June the Finance Ministry announced a reduction of approximately 160 million zlotys in "investments" (public works), and most new projects were postponed; notably, there was no interruption, however, of the work on the port and town of Gdynia.

The Government adopted and adhered to a perfectly sound policy in the circumstances in which the country was placed; it was in no way responsible for the effect of the world depression on Poland, who in 1930 had another excellent harvest—of grain and other natural products, which fetched, however, still lower prices than before. Agriculture was everywhere in a poor way, not because of bad crops but because of superabundance. It was absurd to accuse the régime of being responsible for the bad economic situation, but the charge was made over and over again during the summer.

WARSAW AGRARIAN CONFERENCE

What the position really was in all its starkness was disclosed at the conference held in Warsaw at the end of August, which was attended by delegates from the Little Entente, Estonia, Latvia, Finland, Bulgaria and Hungary, as well as Poland. There had already been agrarian conferences at Bucarest and Sinaia which had come to some agreements. The scope of the Warsaw conference was wider; but the question at each was the same: how was this disastrous surplusage of production to be met? At Warsaw discussion of the problem contemplated agreements between the industrial and agrarian States and agreements based on co-operation between themselves; the conference favoured preferential treatment for the farm products of Europe, the abolition of export duties and of indirect protection, such as discrimination in railway rates. In brief, the agrarian States wanted concessions from the industrial States. The conferences set up a permanent secretariat and research staff. But the price of wheat, the pivotal grain of the world, went on declining in price, and it looked as if over-production had come to stay for a time, despite political régimes or conferences whatsoever. A crisis of plenty, instead of scarcity, on so vast a scale was something new in history, and it was difficult to say how it could be resolved.

Scarcely had the Warsaw agrarian conference terminated when the Pilsudski régime took decisive steps respecting the

political situation. The *Centrolew* had held its great Congress at Cracow, and had adopted a resolution demanding the "liquidation of the régime and the re-establishment of the rights of the Parliament." Simultaneously the Government Block held some forty meetings in the county of Cracow at which the Opposition was censured for action contrary to the interests of the State, and confidence was expressed in the President and Pilsudski. The old legionaries met for their annual reunion that year at Radom on August 10 in the presence of Pilsudski, Slawek and other Ministers. In a fighting speech Slawek said that the legionaries remained faithful to the Pilsudski ideal, and Rydz-Smigly, who spoke next, said that ideal meant the prosperity of the State, and those who pursued it were the only true Nationalists. A motion was passed which, among other things, declared that the legionaries were prepared to shed the last drop of their blood for the intangibility of the frontiers.

TREVIRANUS AND REVISION

By a strange coincidence it was on this very day that Treviranus, former German Minister for the Occupied Territories, delivered an address in the Reichstag demanding, almost in so many words, revision of Germany's eastern frontier. A few days later he declared in an interview in the *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*: "We are working for a just solution of the Corridor problem with all the diplomatic and political resources we possess." Here was something that went far beyond the strife of parties, and all Poland reacted at once, as was shown by the unanimity of the papers, whatever their colour, in maintaining that the only way in which revision could possibly come about was by war! It was afterwards explained that Treviranus spoke as a private individual, and not officially, but his statements left a very bad impression in Poland, and undoubtedly told in favour of Pilsudski, the tenth anniversary of whose great victory over Soviet Russia was being celebrated about this very time. The country was reminded that he was a great soldier who could be trusted to defend it. It was perhaps not

altogether surprising that Pilsudski, a clever tactician as well as a born strategist, deemed the moment opportune for making another big move in his campaign of political education.

SECOND PILSUDSKI CABINET

On August 23 the Slawek Government suddenly resigned. Its composition had differed but slightly from that of its predecessor; it had been in office for about five months, and the only change of importance it had undergone during that period had been that Slawoj-Skladkowski had replaced Jozewski as Minister of the Interior in June: the general had held the same post with great distinction in previous Pilsudski Cabinets. On August 25 President Moscicki accepted a new Government, composed of the same Ministers as before with the striking difference that Pilsudski became Prime Minister as well as Minister of War, and a new-comer in the person of Beck, till then *chef de cabinet* of the War Minister, was appointed Minister without portfolio, which covered his acting as Vice-Premier. Slawek resumed full activity as head of the Government Block, and prepared the way for an appeal to the country. On August 30 Moscicki decreed the dissolution of the Parliament and a general election—to take place for the Sejm on November 16 and a week later for the Senate. In his message the President said that he had reached the conviction that the Parliament which had been in existence was unable to reform the Constitution, though its reform was imperatively necessary.

During September and October Pilsudski gave several interviews in which he dealt in his own extremely trenchant fashion with Parliamentarism in general and Polish Parliamentarism in particular. One of these referred to arrests of former deputies that had taken place on September 10 in accordance with an official *communiqué* of that date, and Pilsudski justified them on the ground of the imperative need of cleansing political life in Poland. Eighteen deputies—Socialist, Populist, National Democrat and Ukrainian, including Witos, who had thrice

been Prime Minister—were incarcerated in the fortress of Brest-Litovsk, charged with both civil and political crimes; later they were joined by Korfanty and others on similar charges; other arrests followed in various parts of the country; in all about 90 former deputies and others were imprisoned. In the meantime the *Centrolew*, less the Christian Democrats, formed an electoral Block under the name of the Union for the Defence of Law and Popular Liberty, and on September 24 Daszynski as its leader addressed a letter to the President in which he said he was afraid that the elections would not be “free and honest.” On the other hand, some of the Populist Piast Party declared for the régime.

On October 7, 1930, twenty electoral lists or tickets were published of candidates for the Sejm and twelve for the Senate; of these the chief were the ticket of the Government Block, with Pilsudski and Slawek at its head; the ticket of the National Democrats, headed by Trampczynski and Rybarski; the ticket of the Catholic Block (Christian Democrats), headed by A. Ponikowski; and the ticket of the Union of the five parties of the Centre and Left, headed by Daszynski. In one of his interviews Pilsudski said: “Poland at the elections has to reply to the question whether she wishes Polish Sejms to resemble those which existed before the partitions or whether she means to break with those traditions of a sad past.” But even more, if possible, than in the elections of 1928, the issue was—Pilsudski, yes or no? As the Marshal’s name appeared first on the list of the Government Block, it was impossible for any elector to misunderstand the position; he had to vote either for or against the Great Man. Though the National Democrats were opposed as strongly as ever to Pilsudski, the real fight lay between the Government Block and the five-party *Centrolew*. But the Block had plenty of money and all the resources of the Government behind it; the political terrain had certainly been well prepared in advance and “directed”; yet its sweeping success astonished most observers at home and abroad.

GENERAL ELECTION, 1930

Without incidents of importance, except at Poznan, where the young National Democrats were troublesome, and at Pruszkow, near Warsaw, where the Socialists belonging to the Government Block and those of the Opposition came to blows, the general election—the fourth since the Liberation—passed off quietly on November 16, 1930, throughout Poland. The electoral system called for the election of 372 deputies, the remaining number, making in all 444, being distributed proportionally in accordance with the results of the poll. The Block obtained 203 mandates, and got 44 more from the proportional distribution, or in all 247—an absolute majority, and nearly twice as many votes as it had in the previous Sejm. Its gains came chiefly from the five-party *Centrolew*, which received 92 mandates as against 166 in 1928. The only Opposition party that improved its position was that of the National Democrats, who had 63 seats as against 37 in 1928. The National Minorities lost 40 seats, having only 33 mandates as against 73 in 1928; the Ukrainians had 20 instead of 37; White Russians 1 instead of 4; the Germans 5 instead of 19; and the Jews 7 instead of 13. The significant change thus shown was in itself a tribute to the Pilsudski régime, which was not unfriendly to the National Minorities—as was also indicated by the considerable number from these Minorities who figured in the lists of the Government Block. Out of 15,520,342 electors on the rolls, 13,078,682 voted; of these the Block got 5,293,694 votes, the *Centrolew* 1,907,380, and the National Democrats 1,455,399. Poland had pronounced for Pilsudski. The Parliamentary deadlock was broken. The elections for the Senate were equally favourable, the Block obtaining 76 out of 111 seats, or more than the two-thirds necessary for the revision of the Constitution. In the Sejm, however, the Pilsudskist majority fell below two-thirds—which meant difficulty in carrying out that revision.

NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARIES

SECOND SLAWEK CABINET

Pilsudski rejoiced in his victory. In an interview given to the *Gazeta Polska* on November 26 he said that the Government had now a solid and stable majority—which was something exceptional in Europe—and this would permit the creation of more normal bases for the collaboration of the three elements of power in the State: the President of the Republic, the Government and the Parliament. He thought that the principal task of the new Parliament was the revision of the Constitution, but it had other duties to attend to. Soon after the elections he resigned the Premiership, as he had decided to go abroad for a long rest, and the Cabinet resigned with him; but with some changes it was reconstituted on December 4, 1930. Slawek again became Prime Minister; Zaleski remained Foreign Minister and the Marshal himself—as since the May Revolution—Minister of War; Kwiatkowski dropped out as Minister of Industry and Commerce and was replaced by Prystor; Beck became Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The new Parliament was opened on December 9 by the reading of the Presidential message by Slawek; Moscicki dwelt on the necessity of reforming the Constitution which, he said, had been drawn up "in the tumult of war and in the midst of deep intestine dissensions," and inevitably was imperfect. The next business in the Sejm was the election of its Speaker, and Switalski was elected by 238 votes to 62 for Zwierzynski, the candidate of the National Democrats, the other parties and groups abstaining. This vote showed very clearly the great difference between the new Sejm—with its strong Pilsudskist majority—and those preceding it.

ELECTIONS IN POLISH UPPER SILESIA

Moscicki also decreed the dissolution of the provincial Parliament in Silesia, and elections were held on November 23, 1930, with 39 mandates for the Poles and 9 for the Germans; the Government Block secured 19, the Korfanty group 16, the

National Workers 3 and the Socialists 1. The Polish success was greater than in the previous election in 1930, and this further evidence of Polish national consolidation was most distasteful to the Germans, who alleged that German voters had been prevented from going to the polls, and had otherwise been intimidated and terrorized. The German Government addressed three Notes on the subject to the League of Nations. In its Reply the Polish Government stated that it was incorrect to say that a prepared terroristic campaign was conducted against the German Minority; it admitted that regrettable incidents had taken place, but added that these affected Polish parties as well as the German Minority, and if members of the latter were among the victims of disturbances, it was among the Poles alone that there had been fatal casualties. Further, the Polish Government, it was observed, had shown its most emphatic disapproval of all the excesses occurring during the electoral campaign, and had instituted an inquiry, with proceedings against officials guilty of neglect of duty. Finally, the Government declared its readiness to indemnify all persons who had suffered damage. But German opinion in the bulk had become increasingly Nationalist, as was indicated by the marked success of the Hitlerites in the recent Reichstag elections, and was now correspondingly vocal respecting Poland, who was also charged with exercising pressure on the German Minority in the general election. The German Press conducted a violent anti-Polish campaign. Everything was done to impress the League of Nations in advance of the culpability of Poland. An election took place in Danzig for its Volkstag in mid-November, 1930, and its chief feature was the success of the Hitlerites, which could only mean more opposition to the Poles by the Danzig Government. The German pack was everywhere in full cry!

CASE OF IMPRISONED DEPUTIES

Two questions engrossed the attention of the Polish Parliament on its opening; one was the case of the imprisoned deputies, particularly those who had been shut up in the fortress of Brest-

Litovsk, and the other was the Budget. On December 11, 1930, the National Democrats gave notice of a motion in the Sejm respecting proceedings against the functionaries who had made the arrests, but five days later the motion was defeated by 208 votes to 148. Tales, some of them true and others false or exaggerated, had been current that the prisoners in Brest had been treated with great rigour. The *intelligentsia*, more especially of the universities, had taken up the matter, and the Opposition Press of course made the most of it. In the Sejm the Government stated that all the prisoners had been released, and if they had any complaints to make they should address them to the judiciary. The question was remitted, however, to the Judicial Commission of the Sejm—and more was to be heard of it. On December 16 Matuszewski, Finance Minister, discussed the Budget for 1931-32, and commented on the severe depression in Poland, as elsewhere; in any case, he said, the Government was determined to maintain the equilibrium of the Budget. The revenue was estimated at 2,890 million zlotys, and the expenditure at 2,886 millions, giving a surplus of 4 millions. Great economy would have to be enforced. In brief, it was the same story as that of the last Budget—"only worse," the world economic crisis having become more acute. The Sejm proceeded to consider the Budget in a much chastened mood.

PILSUDSKI TAKES A HOLIDAY

On December 13, 1930, Pilsudski set forth in a farewell interview his views on the reform of the Constitution. After remarking that the 1921 Constitution had been made with the object of limiting his powers, as he was certain of a majority if he became a candidate for the Presidency, he said that the upshot was to make the rôle of the President of the Republic "simply comic," his function being merely to accept what his Ministers did—to the exclusion of all personal initiative. A new division of political work was necessary; the Head of the State must have full powers, as it was he who ought to regulate the whole machinery of Government. He should have direct relations not

only with his Ministers, whom he ought to have the right to dismiss if he thought it advisable, but also with the Sejm and the Senate. He should be elected by the whole country and not by the National Assembly. In an earlier statement he declared that the "only sovereign in Poland should be the President." On December 15 he left Warsaw for Madeira, which he reached a week later, his sole attendant being his doctor. For a dictator, as outside Poland he was generally held to be, to quit his country, voluntarily, as he did, and probably for some months, appeared strange; but in fact, it denied a dictatorship. What it did show was that the political situation, in his belief, was definitively regulated; he remained away, with great benefit to his health, for rather more than three months.

POLISH-RUMANIAN ALLIANCE RENEWED

January, 1931, opened quietly. Venizelos, Greek Prime Minister, arrived in Warsaw on New Year's Eve; he was on a round of international visits, but his stay in Poland had no special significance. He had several conversations with Zaleski; both statesmen agreed that there was not a single question that divided them, and they considered the formulation of a treaty of arbitration and conciliation. On January 15 Zaleski and Mironescu signed at Geneva a new treaty of guarantee between Poland and Rumania; it differed only slightly from the treaty of May 26, 1926, but it provided for its automatic renewal every five years—which the other treaty had not done; and it did not contain the clauses regarding arbitration and conciliation, as these had been dealt with in a separate agreement. Lengthy and appreciative articles on the new treaty appeared in the Polish, Rumanian and French Press. Touching the alliance with Rumania there was only one opinion in Poland, as before.

SLAWEK JUSTIFIES ARREST OF DEPUTIES

Towards the end of January the Sejm once more had before it the question of the deputies who had been imprisoned at

Brest and other places. The debate was long and stormy, as there was a good deal of feeling on the subject, and not a few Poles thought that Poland had suffered in her credit abroad because of these imprisonments. Slawek as Prime Minister put the case for the Government in a vigorous speech: he said that order had to be maintained in the State, and that this involved taking action against the *Centrolew* with its "mad agitation," the results of which had been seen in the streets of Warsaw (September, 1930) when in a conflict between the police and partisans of the Left, who insisted on making a demonstration which had been forbidden by the authorities, blood was shed and several lives lost. Such a state of things could and would not be tolerated—hence the arrests of politicians who might make or occasion similar disturbances with similar results. Respecting the allegations connected with Brest he said he had made personal inquiry and had ascertained that discipline was severe in the prison, but was not made more severe for the deputies than for anyone else; there had been no cruelty or torture. Slawek recalled that at the Cracow Congress in June, 1930, President Moscicki had been accused of partiality and his resignation demanded; and that the good faith of Poland had been attacked when the congress declared that the Polish democracy would never recognize a foreign loan obtained by the existing Government. He concluded by saying the Government hoped that "in the future it would not be necessary, in order to overcome anarchy, to have recourse to such rigorous measures." The Sejm supported the Government by 232 votes to 150.

SABOTAGE CAMPAIGN IN EASTERN GALICIA

Another subject that interested the Sejm deeply and was discussed towards the end of January was the Ukrainian question in its recent developments. As far back as July, 1930, there were clear indications of a campaign of sabotage in Eastern Galicia, inspired by the organization in Berlin which was known as the Ukrainian Military Organization. This campaign was described

by *Ukraina*, a semi-official paper of the organization published in Chicago, on October 17, 1930:

At present there takes place a second campaign of the Ukrainian Military Organization. This organized attempt is intended to foster unrest among the Ukrainians and panic among the Polish population; to check the expansion of the Poles; to sow among them doubts of their ability to protect Government authorities from Ukrainian attacks; to influence the Ukrainian masses against the Polish State and nation; finally, by causing unrest and anarchy, to foster abroad the notion of the instability of Polish frontiers and lack of internal consolidation in Poland. The campaign began with sabotage acts against the property of Polish public men, such as retired Cabinet Ministers, generals, and high Government officials. Shortly afterwards it was extended to all landowners and colonists, as well as to Government-owned properties.

Such language left no doubt concerning the aims of this campaign. For two months outrages continued, and did not come entirely to an end till October, 1930; they began to abate only after the Government had taken strong measures to repress them. Charges were made that these measures were unnecessarily severe, and protests were addressed to the League of Nations, the result being that Poland incurred a good deal of unfavourable comment abroad. Independent observers, including the Warsaw correspondent of *The Times*, who investigated these accusations on the spot, came to the conclusion that they were greatly and deliberately exaggerated for political purposes. It was true that excessive zeal had led some minor officials to act in an extreme way, but they were few in number, and were punished by the Government. In any case, no Government in the world could deal very leniently with what was confessedly an openly subversive attack on its authority. The Sejm was well aware of the facts and endorsed the action of the Government. The League remitted the Ukrainian complaints to its Committee of Three for consideration. That there were loyal as well as disloyal Ukrainians in Poland was demonstrated by a speech in the Sejm on February 5, 1931, by the Ukrainian deputy Pewny, who said:

The presence of Minority representatives in both Sejm and Senate shows that Poland has no intention of denationalizing them, but treats

them with complete equality. Moreover, the participation of representatives of all nationalities in the Government Block proves that Marshal Pilsudski's Government not only protects them, but desires the co-operation of the National Minorities in the consolidation and development of the Polish State. In return it asks only their sincere and loyal attitude towards the Republic. . . . Neither Ukrainian intellectuals nor the masses of the Ukrainian people support political parties which trouble Polish-Ukrainian relations and co-operate with foreign elements hostile to the Polish State.

POLISH RESENTMENT AGAINST GERMANY

It was the action of "foreign elements hostile to the Polish State" that excited deep resentment among the Poles, who saw it most of all in the attitude of Germany towards their country in the complaints lodged with the League regarding the general election and the Silesian elections. The plain man in Poland wondered why it was that the League appeared to be totally unaware of the truth that the demand for revision of the Polish frontiers lay behind the agitation, and that the complaints were largely of the nature of political manœuvres. On January 21, 1931, the Council of the League heard the German side of the case argued by Curtius and the Polish by Zaleski in speeches of studied moderation. Zaleski spoke of the inquiry which had been and was still being carried on by the Polish Government, and of the punishment of those found guilty. He referred specially to a Polish organization called the Union of Former Silesian Insurgents (*Zwiazek b. Powstancow Slaskich*), on whose activities during the Silesian elections Curtius had severely animadverted. Zaleski compared it to the German *Stahlhelm*. It was true that the President of the Union was the Governor of Polish Upper Silesia, but was not Hindenburg President of the *Stahlhelm*? This comparison drew a strong protest from Curtius.

The discussion, which ranged over election incidents in Poznan and the "Corridor," as well as in Silesia, was, however, not heated, the Council maintaining the standpoint that it was concerned with the question of the treatment of Minorities and not with any quarrel between Poland and Germany. On

January 25 the Council unanimously adopted the findings of its *rapporteur* Yoshizawa to the effect that there had been infringements of the Minority Convention—as had been admitted by Zaleski—but that the Polish Government had inquired and was inquiring into these infringements; and that the Council before going farther into the matter would wait till its meeting in May for a full report from the Polish Government of these proceedings. The Report suggested that the public authorities of the regions concerned should place themselves above suspicion of being involved in political strife, and it censured the Insurgents' Union as being "inspired by a spirit unlikely to facilitate *rapprochement* between two elements of a population whose reconciliation is a condition of political consolidation in their part of Europe." Not a hint, however, was given of the deeper reason for the lack of a *rapprochement*.

ZALESKI ON POLISH FOREIGN POLICY

Addressing the Senate Commission on Foreign Affairs Zaleski declared on January 10, 1931, that the Polish Government would most decidedly and energetically oppose any attempts to use the National Minority problem as a political weapon aimed at Poland's territorial integrity. Speaking to the same body on February 12 he made a general exposition of Polish foreign policy, and after stating that the alliances with France and Rumania, which were in conformity with the Covenant of the League of Nations, were firmly maintained and even extended in scope, he denied reports that a common front was being organized against the Soviet; Poland, he said, would always try to have the best and most neighbourly relations with Russia. The Minister also denied the truth of rumours of the exchange of Pomerania (the "Corridor") for Lithuania—such a "traffic in peoples and territories was impossible in modern times"; Pomerania was inhabited by an essentially Polish population, and Poland cherished nothing but real friendship for Lithuania. These statements naturally led him to add: "For us the question

of the revision of the frontiers of our Republic does not exist. On this subject we shall never admit the possibility of discussion with anybody."

The Seym's Commission on Foreign Affairs devoted two long sittings on February 20-21 to a review of the international situation, with special reference to relations between Poland and Germany. One of the most notable speeches was made by Zielinski, a National Democrat, who had been Consul-General at Berlin for five years. Berlin, he said, was the greatest centre of anti-Polish propaganda, and action hostile to Poland was not confined there to individuals, but was participated in by the German Government—a "most disquieting fact." Stronski, National Democrat leader, said everybody desired a *rapprochement* with Germany, but the difficulty was that Berlin never ceased to pose the question of territorial revision, and Poland had to take that into account. Prince J. Radziwill, president of the Commission, and a partisan of *rapprochement* with Germany, said "that Curtius had declared that Germany would remain a member of the League of Nations till she was assured that her demands would be satisfied, and that the essential feature of her policy meant the seizure from Poland of a whole province" (Pomerania or the "Corridor"). "Taking that in conjunction with the habitual attitude of Germany towards the Soviet, I feel compelled," said the prince, "to state that Germany is pursuing a policy of blackmail (*politique de chantage*); such a policy can lead only to a catastrophe, not only for Poland, but also for Europe and above all for Germany. She cannot make a pacific policy at Geneva and arm the Soviet at the same time!" Zaleski wound up the debate; always moderate, he advocated no departure from the policy that the Government had maintained in the past—a tactic of defence; he claimed it to be increasingly successful. "Slowly but surely," he said, "the world becomes more and more certain that the majority of the questions raised against us at Geneva have nothing material in them and are brought forward merely to excite prejudice against Poland; and seeing this the world is beginning to consider it more prejudicial to those who act in that way than

to us." A wise speech, though it did not please one or two deputies who favoured an "offensive" tactic.

POLAND RATIFIES GERMAN TREATIES

Tension in Poland was marked, as was to be expected, but it did not prevent the ratification by the Sejm of the Liquidation agreement of October, 1929, and the commercial treaty of March, 1930, between Poland and Germany. After a prolonged sitting on March 11-12 the former was voted by 278 to 90, the majority consisting of the Government Block, the Socialists and the National Minorities, and the latter by 180 to 70. The opposition to both ratifications proceeded chiefly from the National Democrats, who protested that the Liquidation agreement was more favourable to Germany than to Poland, and that the advantages of the commercial treaty had been rendered nugatory in practice by the subsequent imposition of what was virtually a prohibitive increase in tariffs on Polish imports. The speakers for the Government admitted that neither the agreement nor the treaty awoke enthusiasm, but it was only partly true to say that Poland gained nothing from them, for the agreement, which was bound to The Hague agreements, did benefit her by releasing her from payments which she would otherwise have to meet, and after all something was to be got out of the treaty. Their greatest argument, however, was that it was the clear duty of Poland to do what she could to lessen the shock of the world economic crisis by entering into normal relations with her neighbours. As Zaleski put it: if, despite ratification by Poland, Germany failed to ratify the treaty, Poland would not lose by it, inasmuch as she had shown her wish for pacific collaboration with all who desired the betterment of the economic situation—and therefore it was not on Poland that the blame could be placed for failure.

NEW CONSTITUTION REFERRED TO COMMISSION

It was not till March 4, 1931, that the Sejm debated the revision of the Constitution as proposed in the draft of the Government

Block, but it was obvious from the start that the Block had not the two-thirds majority required by the existing Constitution to pass it, and all that was done was to refer it to the Constitutional Commission. The Parliament closed on March 21, 1931, with the passing of the Budget for 1931-32, and the revision of the Constitution made no further progress, but it remained the chief political question before the country, and Pilsudski was not less determined to resolve it according to his own ideas.

Notwithstanding the unpropitious economic situation Poland made a fairly good showing financially for the year 1930-31. The actual revenue and expenditure had worked out respectively at 2,747 million zlotys and 2,801 million zlotys, leaving a deficit of about 54 millions. As compared with the Estimates the revenue was lower by about 270 millions, but the expenditure also was lower, owing to economies, by about 175 millions. The continued decrease in the purchasing power of the population and the consequent decline in its taxpaying power, because of the economic crisis, were again reflected in the reduced revenue. The deficit for the year was made good from the Treasury Reserve accumulated during the previous years; the reserve thereafter stood at 300 millions. Considering the circumstances Poland had done well—much better, in fact, than several other countries similarly placed.

BUDGET ECONOMIES

With a view to assuring Budgetary equilibrium in the face of the economic situation the Estimates for 1931-32 were modified by the Sejm in conjunction with the Government. The expenditure was reduced; the bulk of it consisted in Administration charges for salaries of functionaries, and the Government was authorized to diminish these salaries by 15 per cent., as well as the pay of officers by the same figure (afterwards changed to 5 per cent.), the total amount thus saved being 180 million zlotys. At the same time expenditure on public works was reduced; thus, the sum of 19 million zlotys previously allocated for further construction on Gdynia disappeared from the

Estimates, but in this case the money was obtained from part of the proceeds of a loan for 32,400,000 dollars at $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., which had been negotiated with a subsidiary of the Swedish Match Company in connexion with the Match Monopoly, the exploitation of which had been renewed and extended on terms favourable to Poland. There were, however, some increases in expenditure for Social services, pensions and Debt charges. The net result was that the Estimates for expenditure were reduced by about 20 million zlotys, the total amounting to 2,866 millions. The revenue was put at 2,867 millions, leaving a surplus of about a million. Hard times! But Poland faced them bravely, confident in her future.

FRENCH CONFIDENCE IN POLAND

That this confidence was shared by others was signally demonstrated when a loan for a milliard francs was negotiated by the Polish Government with a French syndicate, in which Schneider-Creusot was mainly interested, for the completion of the great railway from Polish Upper Silesia to Gdynia, the loan being ratified by the Polish Parliament, in an extraordinary session held for that purpose in April, 1931. A certain amount of work had been done on the railway already by the Government, but the economic depression had retarded further development. The agreement with the syndicate provided for the completion of the line, with double track, within three years. Like Gdynia, this was a sure sign of national consolidation and progress, as well as of French co-operation. German comment dwelt on the political significance of the railway and loan as showing that France stood by Poland on the question of the "Corridor," but it also underlined the strategic importance of this north-to-south line traversing Poland almost parallel to and not far distant from the frontier. Polish eyes saw in the railway a fresh guarantee of the territorial integrity of Poland and of the intangibility of her western boundaries, in accordance with the Peace and other treaties. And this all the more because Poland, like France, regarded the projected Austro-German Customs Union of

March 19, 1931, as a scarcely veiled attack on one of these treaties—that of St. Germain.

News of the Austro-German Customs Union project reached the public about the end of March, and at once gave rise to disquiet and alarm, as a Customs Union between Germany and Austria could not but be regarded as a step to their political union—*Anschluss an Deutschland*—which was anathema to France, Poland and the Little Entente, and apparently forbidden by Article 88 of the St. Germain Treaty. There was also the fact that the Customs Union appeared to be barred to Austria by the Geneva Protocol of October 4, 1922. Both Germany and Austria maintained that the Customs Union was not illegal, and when the question came up before the Council of the League of Nations in May, 1931, it was its legal aspect, and not the economic or political points of view, that was alone discussed. On May 19 the Council unanimously decided to ask The Hague Court to pronounce whether the Customs Union was or was not compatible with the St. Germain Treaty and the Geneva Protocol. Schober, Austrian Foreign Minister, promised that meanwhile there would be no change in the existing arrangements between his country and Germany. This action of the Council was widely considered as a blow to revisionist hopes and to plans for a revival of the *Mittleuropa* programme of the Pan-Germans, but its ultimate value remained to be seen.

POLAND AND THE LEAGUE

Several questions of particular interest to Poland were discussed at this May, 1931, meeting of the Council. Two of them were concerned with Danzig. Because of the success of the Nazis in the elections Sahm had resigned the Presidency of the Danzig Senate, and he was succeeded in the office by Ziehm, who ignored all the protests of Strasburger, Polish Commissary-General, in connexion with numerous attacks on Poles and their property in the Free City. Strasburger handed in his resignation to the Polish Government, which however, did not

accept it. On April 25 Gravina, High Commissioner of the League in Danzig, had reported to the League that relations between Poland and Danzig had become most unsatisfactory. In the upshot the Council appealed to both parties to take whatever action was necessary to re-establish a spirit of confidence and co-operation, and calm opinion in both countries. Touching the second question—the treatment in Danzig of Polish nationals and other persons of Polish language and origin—the Council decided to refer it to The Hague Court for an advisory ruling. The simple truth, of course, about the Free City was that it was more than ever a hotbed of extreme German nationalism.

Another matter of great importance was discussed by the Council on May 23: the Report of the Polish Government which had been prepared at the Council's request, as already noted, on the judicial and other measures taken in Poland after and in consequence of the incidents in the elections in Polish Upper Silesia. When Yoshizawa, the *rapporteur*, proposed that the inquiry should be closed, Curtius asked for an adjournment till September, on the ground that he had not had sufficient time to form a definite opinion respecting the measures taken by Poland. Henderson, as President of the Council, also favoured adjournment, and the examination of the Report was postponed to the September session. Some other questions of direct interest to Poland were also held over to the next meeting of the Council, among them being the Report of the Committee of Three on the Ukrainian complaints in connexion with Eastern Galicia.

THE PRYSTOR CABINET

With the return on March 29, 1931, of Marshal Pilsudski to Poland, by way of Gdynia on a Polish warship—what a far cry from the grey days in Magdeburg!—some change in the composition of the Slawek Government had been generally expected immediately, but nothing of the kind occurred until May 26 following, when Slawek and the Cabinet resigned.

The retiring Premier explained that he had decided to give his whole time to the leadership of the Government Block, and more particularly to pressing forward the amendment of the Constitution, which in his view remained the most important work before the country. On May 27 Prystor, Minister of Commerce in the outgoing Cabinet, was entrusted with the formation of a new Government, and was quickly successful. His Cabinet was nearly the same as the preceding one, the most notable change, in addition to Slawek's absence, being the appointment of John Pilsudski as Finance Minister. Matuszewski had been a good Finance Minister, but his disappearance from the Government was said to be accounted for by the fact that the Marshal, who had not seen eye to eye with him on reducing the pay of army officers, had determined to take a hand in shaping the financial policy of Poland, and therefore had selected his own brother for this Ministry. Shortly after entering on office John Pilsudski announced that his general policy would not depart from that of Matuszewski, and that to offset loss on the national revenue, the national expenditure would be reduced to 2,450 million zlotys.

THE STAHLHELM AT Breslau

Polish relations with Germany could scarcely be improved by the great Stahlhelm demonstration which was held on May 31 at Breslau, in presence of the ex-Crown Prince, Marshal Mackensen, and other German notables. One of the chiefs of the organization declared that it would never recognize the frontiers established by the Versailles Treaty—a threat, plainly, to the Poles. Zaleski sent a Note to Berlin suggesting that a demonstration so close to the German-Polish frontier tended to disturb international relations; in reply, Germany stated that the Stahlhelm was a private association and had no official character. About the same time Treviranus once more preached revisionism. But also about the same time, all over the world, interest in high politics fell away as the general financial and economic situation, grown much worse, came more and more



MARSHAL PILSUDSKI LANDING AT GDYNIA, MARCH, 1931

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into view, chiefly because of the virtual bankruptcy of the Reich, as evidenced by the failure of big national banking and other commercial institutions, and Hindenburg's appeal to President Hoover for help—that led to the "Hoover Moratorium" postponing for one year payments on account of War Debts and Reparations, by which, incidentally, Poland was temporarily relieved to the extent of some 114 million zlotys.

But economics cannot be divorced from politics, as Sir Austen Chamberlain pointed out in a letter to *The Times* of July 16. After commenting on the economic side of the German financial crisis, he wrote:

The political side is not less important, for the lack of confidence has its roots in political unrest no less than in economic causes, and for this unrest Germany bears a large measure of responsibility. The rise of the Hitler movement, with its threat of repudiating those international engagements which have been voluntarily undertaken no less than those which were imposed by the Treaties; the Stahlhelm demonstration provocatively staged close to the frontier, at first officially explained away as the doings of "a private association with no military aims," and now, as your correspondent informs us, made the occasion for a charge of espionage against foreigners present at the gathering; the matter and perhaps even more the manner of the negotiations for the Customs Union with Austria—all these could not have been better designed if their purpose had been to destroy confidence in Germany's good faith, and to convince those who have worked for reconciliation that their motives have been misunderstood and their actions misinterpreted. I do not suggest that this has been the purpose of the German Government or people; but "history," as Prince Bülow wrote, "teaches us that one-sided trust has no staying power." It is the inevitable consequence of their acts.

After referring to an editorial in *The Times* stating that many countries were called on to bear sacrifices by their acceptance of the moratorium—sacrifices "all primarily made for the benefit of one country—Germany—which is itself called upon for none," Sir Austen continued:

Is it too much to ask that Germany should recognize this fact, not in words only but in deeds; that the German Government and people should cease to place obstacles in the path of the peace-maker, and that accepting the relief which is offered to them in the spirit in which it is given, they should set themselves seriously to discourage the

agents provocateurs who have been busy in their midst, and to restore to Europe that confidence in their good will and good faith which recent events have done so much to destroy? If this were the result of President Hoover's courageous intervention, his action would indeed be fruitful, and hope would dawn for us all.

As was inevitable, the German crisis, with its spreading ruin, had its repercussions in Poland as elsewhere. Though the commercial treaty with Germany was disappointing to the Poles, there was none the less a great deal of trade between the two countries all the time, with the balance usually in favour of Poland, which meant that some Polish money remained in the hands of German banks; but if the treaty had been implemented as the Poles wished and expected there would have been very much larger sums to their credit in these banks than there actually were—another of the little ironies of history. The announcement of the moratorium had at first a tonic effect on the world situation, especially and naturally enough in Germany, but as some time passed before it went into operation the benefit resulting from it was much less than had been anticipated.

FRENCH AND POLISH NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET

Some stir was caused throughout Europe when towards the end of August it was announced in the Press that negotiations were going on between France and the Soviet and between Poland and the Soviet with a view to conclude in each case a treaty of non-aggression. For easily understood reasons the news occasioned disquiet in Germany; such treaties were roundly denounced there as incompatible with the Rapallo and Berlin Treaties. It presently transpired that there had been *pourparlers* in Paris, of which Poland had been kept informed by her ally, respecting a commercial treaty with the Soviet, which, to improve its standing in French opinion, had also proposed a pact of non-aggression. On August 23 Patek, Polish Minister at Moscow, handed to Litvinoff a proposal for a pact of non-aggression, but there was nothing new in this as

a proposal of much the same kind had been submitted by Poland to the Soviet in 1896, and there was the Litvinoff Protocol already in existence. These negotiations apparently had no issue; but it was noteworthy that the *Temps*, dismissing the subject, said that a treaty of non-aggression between France and the Soviet would not be signed by France unless Poland and Rumania were specifically guaranteed against Soviet aggression. Behind these words lay the great truth, made abundantly evident in 1931, that France held an enormously strong position in Europe—as strong perhaps as she had ever held in all her history. The power of France made itself felt when Austria, practically bankrupt again, applied to her for a loan.

POLAND AND THE LEAGUE IN SEPTEMBER, 1931

Great interest had been attached in advance to the September meetings of the League of Nations, but this was much reduced when Dr. Schober, representing Austria at Geneva, stated that, with the assent of Germany, he "would pursue no farther" the Austro-German Customs Union. His statement anticipated the verdict of The Hague Court which pronounced against the Union by a narrow majority on the score of its contravention of the Geneva Protocol, but apart from that the conclusive argument was that it was only through France that the Austrian need of a loan could be satisfied. Germany, practically bankrupt too, could not help Austria. The Council of the League noted the withdrawal of the question from its agenda; but whether *Anschluss* was dead or had merely been stunned the future alone could reveal.

On September 19 the Council had before it three questions that were of the greatest importance to Poland. The first of these concerned Danzig. In May the Council, apprised of the disturbed relations between the Free City and Poland, had asked Gravina, its High Commissioner in Danzig, to report on the situation, and he did so in August. A certain appeasement, he said, was observable, but he made a point of drawing attention to the manifestations hostile to Poland which were organ-

ized in the territory of the Free City by parties of the Right, both German and Danziger, their object being the return of Danzig to the Reich; these manifestations were undoubtedly inimical to good relations with Poland. Strasburger, Ziehm, Curtius and others took part in the discussion, and the Council unanimously passed a resolution condemning "every action or manifestation directed against the status of the Free City."

The second question was concerned with Upper Silesia—the "incidents" in the election held in November, 1930, and already mentioned in this Chapter. At the May meeting of the Council a report submitted by Yoshizawa, *rappporteur* in this matter, had been held over at the request of Curtius, as he had had insufficient time to study it. Before the question was discussed by the September Council, interviews took place between Zaleski and Curtius, but no change was made in Yoshizawa's report, which was accepted by the Council, after some remarks by Yoshizawa, who said that Zaleski had assured him that the Polish Government would do everything in its power to imbue the German Minority in Upper Silesia with confidence, "without which there could not be that co-operation between Minorities and the State which was enjoined on both by the treaties and by the resolutions of the League of Nations."

The third question related to the petitions received from the Ukrainian Minority in Eastern Galicia which had been referred by a previous Council, as mentioned above, to the Committee of Three for examination and report. This committee, with some changes in its composition, had met first in London and later at Geneva; on receiving a Note from the Polish Government stating that steps were being taken to bring about an agreement with the dissident Ukrainians, the committee had postponed a decision—this was in May. But shortly before the September Council the situation was heavily clouded by the murder of Thaddeus Holowko, Vice-President of the Government Block, at Truskawiec, a bathing resort in Eastern Galicia, by agents of the Ukrainian Military Organization. He had been prominent among the men who were

trying, with more or less success, to come to terms with the Ukrainians—and this was the result! At the request of the committee the Council put off further consideration of the Ukrainian Minority question to its next meeting, January, 1932.

THE PARLIAMENT RESUMES

A month earlier than usual, the Polish Parliament reassembled on October 1, 1931. The financial situation of the country, with the world depression intensified by the abandonment by England and some other countries of the Gold Standard, demanded particular attention, as Prystor, the Prime Minister, told the Sejm in a speech on the opening day. He said the aim of the Government was to protect Poland, so far as possible, from the shocks of the world crisis, and to maintain a firm grasp of the domestic economic situation. The position of the Bank of Poland was good, with its "cover" of more than 50 per cent in gold or gold equivalents. The zloty was stable. The national expenditure had been decreased to meet in great part the fall in the revenue, and the equilibrium of the Budget was and would be maintained. Special attention had been devoted to agriculture, measures, for instance, having been taken to prevent the lowering of prices for rye beyond a certain figure. Without minimizing the generally unfortunate situation, Prystor concluded on a fairly optimistic note.

On the first reading of the Budget for 1932-33, John Pilsudski, the Finance Minister, put the national income for the year at 2,375 million zlotys and the expenditure at 2,452 millions, leaving a deficit of 77 millions—which, he said, would not have to be met if the Hoover Moratorium was renewed for another year, but which, failing that relief, would be covered by a further curtailment of the expenditure, however painful that would be. He, too, emphasized the determination of the Government to keep the Budget balanced; there would be no recourse to inflation. At the beginning of its sessions the Parliament paid a warm tribute to Skrzynski, the former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, who had been killed in a

motor-car accident on September 25 at Ostrow, in Poznan. After the May Revolution he had kept out of politics.

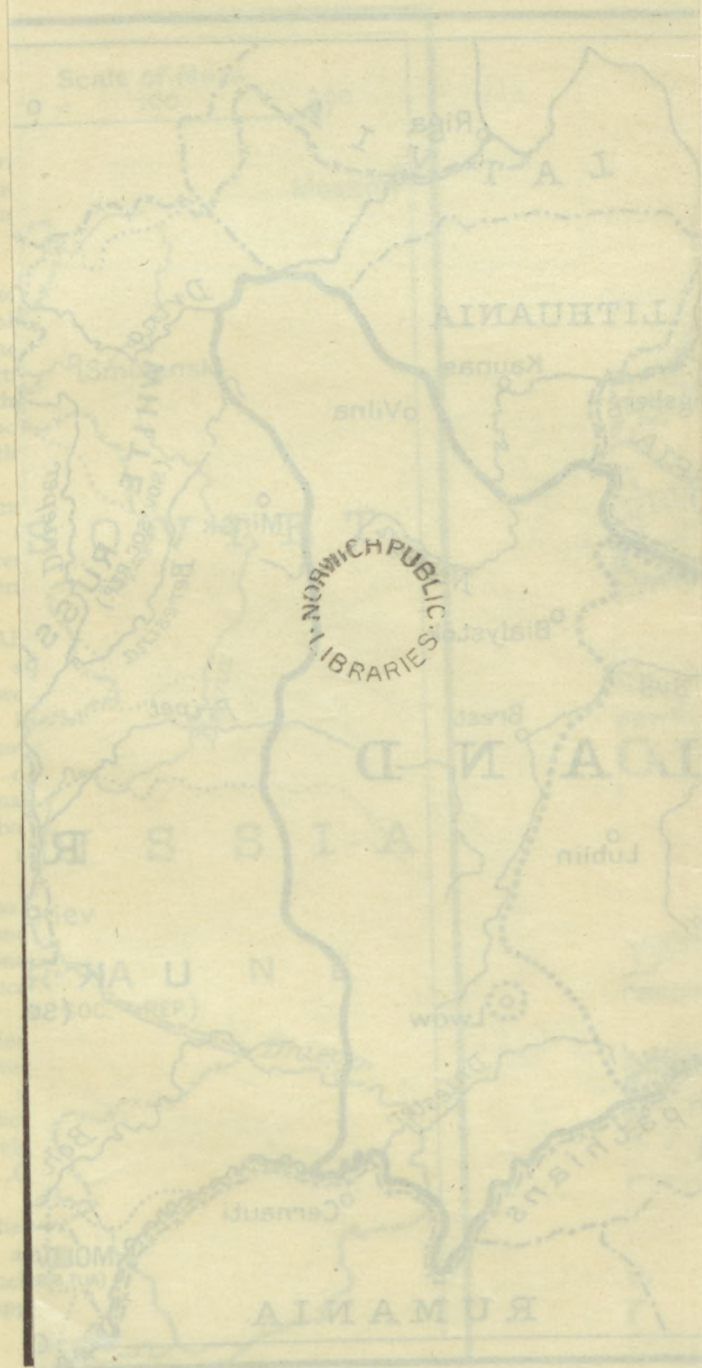
Most of the sessions of both Sejm and Senate were occupied with the passing into law of Government Bills dealing with the financial and economic situation; the Opposition was by no means inarticulate, but could do little or nothing against the unimpaired strength of the Government Block. Among subjects discussed by the Sejm was that of the Constitution but the debate was largely academic. Zaleski, Foreign Minister continuously for more than five years, made the usual statement on foreign policy; he dwelt at length on the bearing of the world depression on the general situation, and stressed the value of the French alliance. On another occasion he referred to a controversy which had arisen with Latvia concerning the Polish Minority in that State, and was causing much feeling in Poland, where the help given to the Latvians in 1920 was not forgotten. Polish citizens of Latvia, mostly in Dvinsk and its neighbourhood, were accused of cherishing irredentist aims—which, Zaleski stated, received no support from the Polish Government; it asked, however, that fair treatment should be given to the people of Polish blood in that country.

Among other questions that interested the Parliament were the decision of The Hague Court rejecting, in favour of Lithuania, the Polish request for the reopening of the Landwarow-Kaisiadoris railway, which involved the navigation of the Niemen; and the rejection by the League High Commissioner, after consulting the League, of the preposterous claim made by Danzig to a virtual monopoly of the whole of the Polish sea exports and imports—to the exclusion of Gdynia. Another matter that touched the Sejm closely, as well as all Poland, was the beginning on October 26 of the trial of eleven deputies, some of whom had been members of the last Parliament, and the rest were members of the Parliament then sitting, charged with sedition; they were among the number who had been arrested during the election campaign, imprisoned in the fortress of Brest Litovsk, and subsequently released on bail; Witos was the most prominent. The trial was expected to last

five or six weeks. The Parliament was adjourned for a month on November 9 by Presidential decree.

NEW POLAND THIRTEEN YEARS OLD

On November 11, 1931, all Poland united in celebrating the thirteenth anniversary of the restoration of the State. The Poles had indeed much to be thankful for. In the capital, as throughout the country, there were the usual solemn, deeply reverential services and the usual rejoicings for the national deliverance from the hands of the oppressors. Because of the world depression the note struck was sober, but not sombre. A feeling of security in the present and confidence in the future was universal, despite the pressure of the untoward circumstances of the time.



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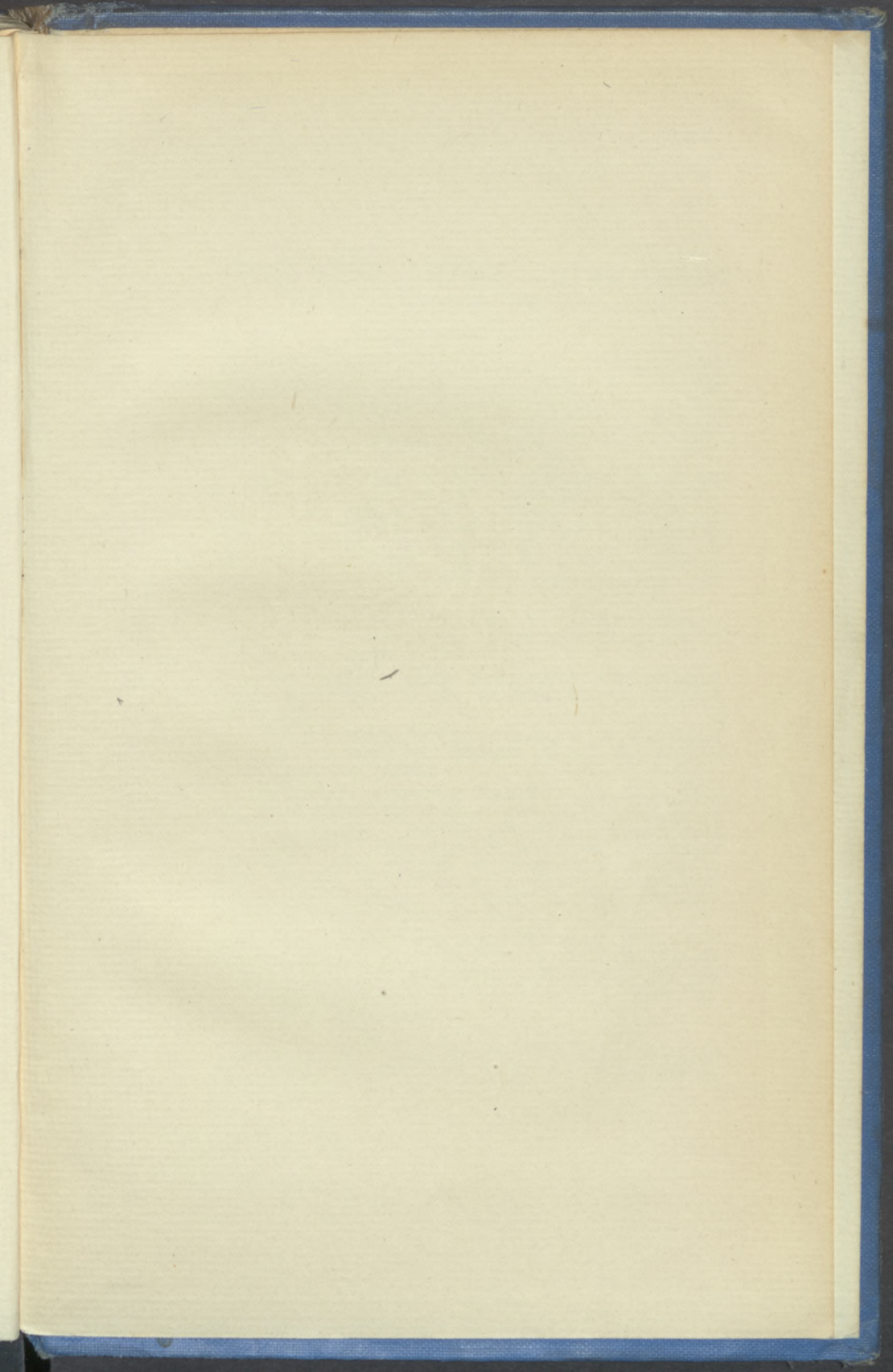
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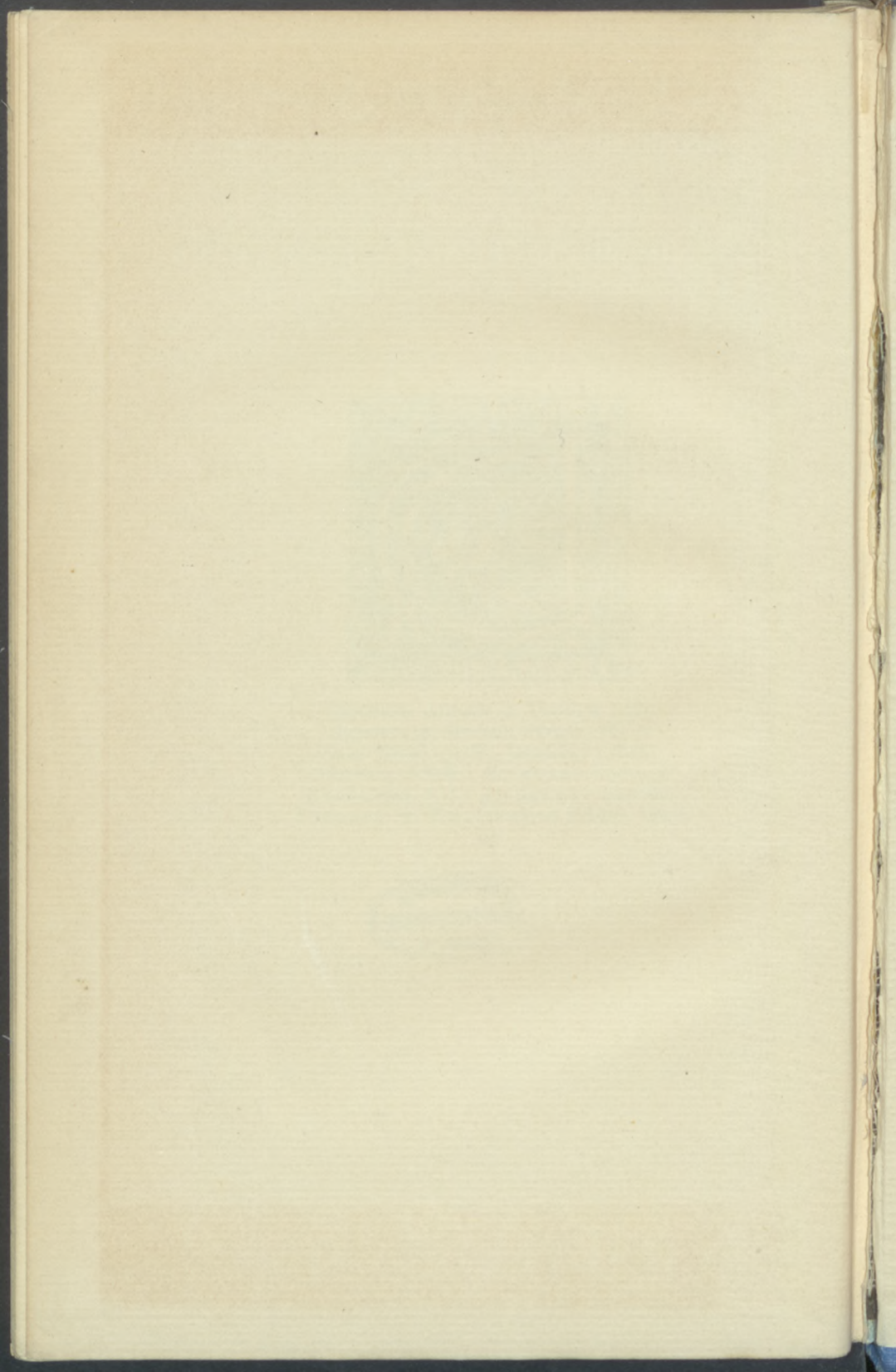




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